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2000 - A Line Through the Past – Historical and Ethnographic Background for the Branch Canal, California State Water Project, Coastal Branch Series Paper Number 1.

A Line Through the Past

Historical and Ethnographic Background for the Branch Canal

by Betty Rivers

with a contribution by
Robert O. Gibson

and Addendum

Salinan and Northern Chumash Ethnogeography
in San Luis Obispo and Northern Santa Barbara Counties
Elicited from Mexican Land Grant Records

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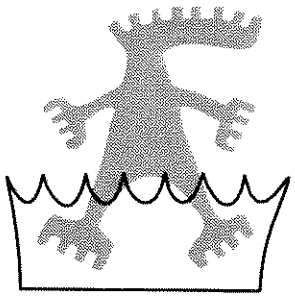

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Cover: View of Santa Margarita Ranch circa 1906. Courtesy of the Atascadero Historical Society

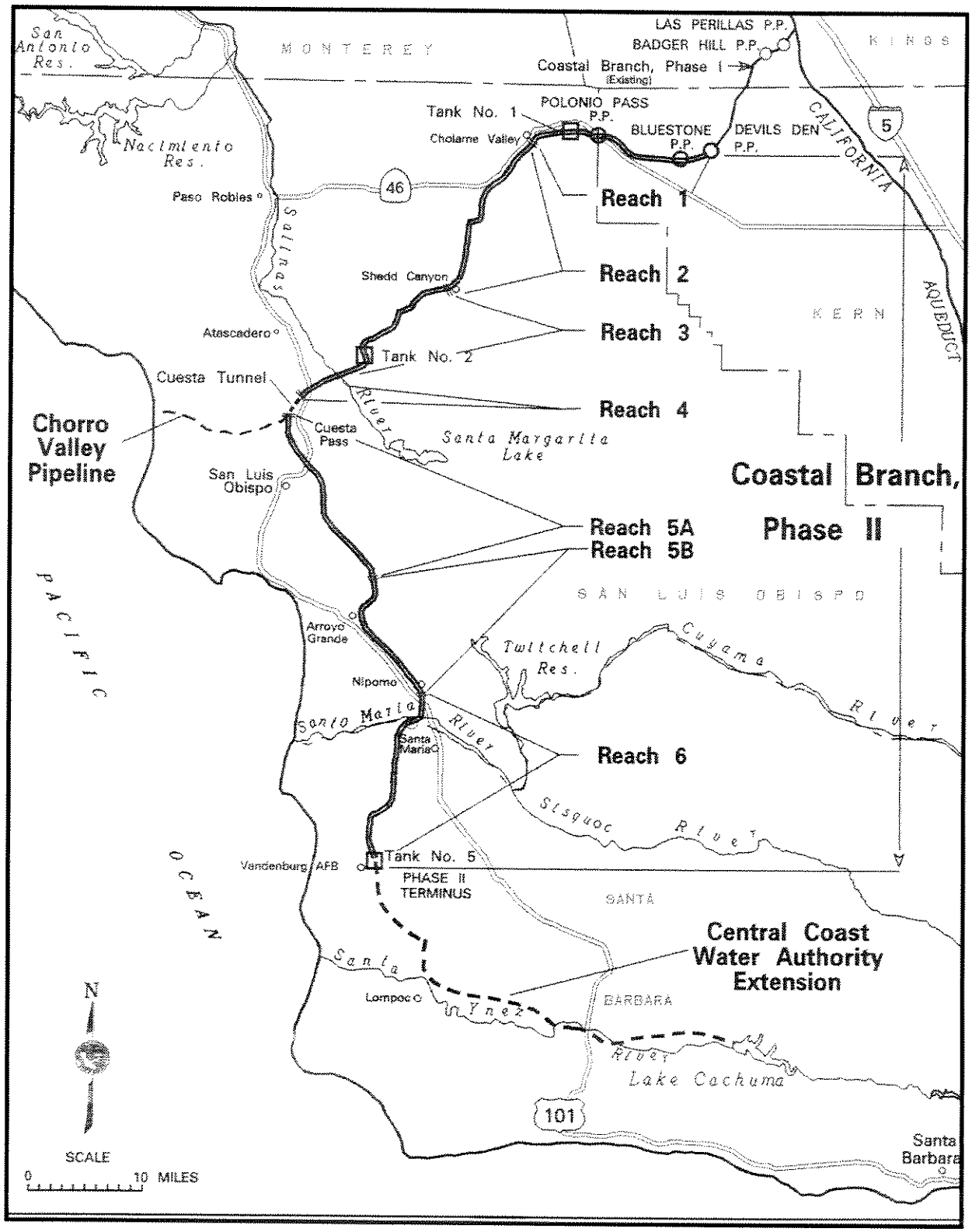


Figure 1. Project Location.

FOREWORD

The San Luis Obispo County Archaeological Society (SLOCAS) is pleased to make available a new publication series, which documents the major prehistoric and historic studies conducted for the State Water Project, Coastal Branch, Phase II and three local extensions. This publication series breaks new ground in the cultural resource studies of Central California. This part of the state has a rich human history that spans 10,000 years, from the end of the Ice Age to the present. Very little research has been conducted in this region, prior to the start of these studies. The advent of the State Water Project has given us a marvelous opportunity to explore this region in depth, providing us with more insights into its settlement and occupation by our predecessors.

The State Water Project delivers water from the California Aqueduct to San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara counties. It was developed cooperatively by the State Department of Water Resources, the San Luis Obispo Flood Control and Water Conservation District, and the Central Coast Water Authority (CCWA). Phase I of the Coastal Branch connected the California Aqueduct, which traverses the west side of the San Joaquin Valley, with a pumping plant at Devil's Den, in northwestern Kern County. Phase II extended the Coastal Branch from Devil's Den to Vandenberg Air Force Base.

To facilitate construction of Coastal Branch, Phase II is divided into six segments, termed Reaches. Reach 1 begins at the Devil's Den Pumping Plant on the western edge of the San Joaquin Valley, and extends through Polonio Pass over the easternmost hills of the Coast Range to a point near Cholame. From there Reach 2 follows State Route 46/41 to Shedd Canyon, in the foothills of east central San Luis Obispo County. Reach 3 continues from Shedd Canyon over the Coast Range to the east bank of the Salinas River. After crossing the Salinas River, Reach 4 traverses Santa Margarita Valley, climbing the Santa Lucia Range to Cuesta Tunnel. From there, Reach 5A descends the Santa Lucia Range, traversing the hills east of the City of San Luis Obispo, and terminating in Arroyo Grande Valley. Reach 5B follows Arroyo Grande westward, turning south before the town of Arroyo Grande to follow State Route 101 through the Nipomo Hills to the Santa Maria River. After crossing the river, Reach 6 traverses the Santa Maria Valley and Orcutt Hills, terminating near Casmalia on Vandenberg Air Force Base. The Department of Water Resources built Reaches 1 through 5A. The Central Coast Water Authority built Reaches 5B through 6 and the Mission Hills Extension and the Santa Ynez Extension, which runs from Vandenberg Air Force Base through the Santa Ynez Valley to Lake Cachuma. The Chorro Valley Extension, which was built by the county of San Luis Obispo, provides water to the City of Morro Bay.

The California Department of Parks and Recreation, in addition to various cultural resource management firms, conducted the cultural resources studies and reports for the State Water Project. SLOCAS has attempted, whenever practical, to convert the various reports into a similar style. With the exception of removing reference to confidential information, the text of the reports has remained virtually intact. Some illustrations and tables have been reformatted to create a more readable document.

We wish to thank Bob Orlins of the Department of Parks and Recreation for his part in making the reports available to SLOCAS for publication. Of course we also thank the various authors who have worked closely with us in order to bring these publications to fruition. Finally, we must thank the SLOCAS publication committee, Valerie A. Levulett, Betsy and Luther Bertrando, whose work continues on forthcoming volumes.

DEDICATION

This volume is gratefully dedicated to Carol Nelson, Project Manager of Coastal Branch Planning and Mitigation Efforts, whose concern for cultural resources and support of cultural resource work were perceptive, consistent, and enthusiastic. Thank you, Carol, from all of us who had the privilege of working with you.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My thanks go to everyone who contributed to these studies. I am particularly grateful to Glenn Farris of the Department of Parks and Recreation for his careful research on the ranchos of Mexican California. He is to be thanked, also, for further information on the ranchos, presented in an addendum to this volume.

I thank the Parks and Recreation archaeologists who served as project leads for work on the Branch Canal: Eloise Richards Barter researched the Jack House files; Philip Hines contributed information on the Santa Maria Valley; Robert Orlins, who recommended publication of these studies.

John Foster, Supervisor of Parks and Recreation's Cultural Resource Program Unit, provided support and encouragement throughout the Branch Canal project. Also from Parks and Recreation, Beth Walls and Suzan Moody consistently helped with clerical backup, and Arthur Fong generously shared his computer expertise. I am grateful to them all.

Michele Ng of the Department of Water Resources maintained her helpfulness and efficiency throughout the project's many changes, and I thank her. Thanks also to Tamara Spear of Water Resources; her long hours at the computer aided greatly in the revised version of these studies.

I am indebted to the staffs of numerous repositories, whose holdings provided historical and ethnographic information for this volume. Thanks to John Johnson, Curator of Anthropology, Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History, who, with his customary graciousness, clarified and corrected portions of the ethnographic material. The staffs of the San Luis Obispo County Historical Society and the Santa Maria Valley Historical Society, along with Mrs. Jean Hubbard, representing the South County Historical Society, offered kindly assistance, for which I thank them. I am grateful to the staffs of the Bancroft Library; the California History Room, California State Library; the Cecil H. Green Library, Stanford University; the Santa Barbara Public Library; and Shields Library, U.C. Davis. I particularly thank the Special Collections staff of the San Luis Obispo City-County Library for their help and enthusiasm.

I thank Valerie Levulett who urged wider distribution of the Branch Canal reports and worked with SLOCAS for their publication.

My thanks to Luther and Betsy Bertrando, of SLOCAS, for their work on this volume, which has included correcting and formatting the text, indexing, and preparation of the figures. I am grateful to them for their thoughtful work, their patience, and their encouragement.

CONTENTS

PREHISTORIC OVERVIEW

Reaches 1 and 2 of the pipeline route, extending about 32 linear miles in Kern and eastern San Luis Obispo Counties, cross a portion of Yokuts territory on the east and Southern Salinan homeland toward the west. The territory of the Northern, or Obispeño, Chumash begins near the end of Reach 3; and that of the Purismeño Chumash starts in Reach 6 (Fig. 1). The prehistory and ethnography of the Purismeño have been included in the cultural resource reports prepared for the Central Coast Water Authority.

Yokuts

The San Joaquin Valley extends ca. 250 miles south from Stockton, is approximately 40 miles wide, and is bounded by the Sierra Nevada on the east, the Diablo, Temblor, and Gabilan ranges on the west, and the Tehachapi Mountains to the south. Large rivers drain the western slopes of the Sierra Nevada as they join the San Joaquin River to flow north. The southern third of the valley (south of Fresno) once contained three large lakes, Tulare, Kern, and Buena Vista, with interconnecting sloughs and marshes. At the time of European contact, about forty groups of Yokuts were living in the San Joaquin Valley, fifteen of them in the southern portion (Kroeber 1925:478-484).

Predecessors of the Yokuts apparently arrived early in this area; artifacts from the Witt site on the north shore of Tulare Lake have been dated to about 11,000 years ago (Riddell and Olsen 1969:128). An 8,000-year-old site on the western shore of Buena Vista Lake contains a low density of stone tools related to the hunting and processing of large game (Moratto 1984:99).

Between 8,000 and 4,000 years ago, the southern valley's population increased. Permanent villages and mortuary areas were established on the lakes; a diversifying subsistence base is reflected in the enlarged variety of stone tools and other utilitarian artifacts found in sites from this period. As the climate became slightly drier during the Altithermal, ca. 6,000 to 4,000 B.P., some shifts from hunting to seed processing apparently occurred (Wallace 1978:449). Deep basin metates and multifaceted manos predated widespread use of mortars and pestles, which were more commonly used after ca. 3,000 B.P. to process acorns, tule roots, and other foods.

The immediate ancestors of the Yokuts developed a rich material culture which shared many traits with that of the Sacramento Delta region to the north, and those of the Chumash territories to the south and west.

A large excavation project in the Buena Vista Lake region yielded shell beads and bone artifacts dating to the Middle and Late periods of the Chumash culture, ca. 2,500 to 1,500 years B.P. (Gifford and Schenck 1926; Wedel 1941).

Olivella shell bead money, which postdates 1,000 years B.P., has been found throughout central and southern California, suggesting a fair amount of commerce in the southern San Joaquin Valley and regions to the south and west. One item both used and traded by the Yokuts was asphaltum; artifacts found at archaeological site KER-152, near Devil's Den, indicate the long-term use of this area as an asphaltum source (Latta 1949::221, 243-245; Woodward and Rivers 1993:46).

Southern (Migueleño) Salinan

The southern end of Cholame Valley is within the territory historically occupied by the Southern, or Migueleño, Salinan (Kroeber 1953; Wolleson 1972; Hester 1978; Gibson 1983). Their homeland extended north-south from slightly above present-day Bradley to just north of Paso Robles. Except for the northernmost portion of their county, adjoining the homeland of the Antoniaño Salinan, the western boundary of the Migueleño lay in the Coast Range. The Diablo Range formed an eastern boundary. Migueleño territory lay in present-day Monterey and San Luis Obispo Counties and included the western boundary of Kern County (Gibson 1983; Rivers and Jones 1993).

Few archaeological excavations have been undertaken in Salinan territory, but evidence from this work indicates that the ancestors of the Salinan settled in the Monterey county area more than 5,000 years ago (Breschini, Haversat and Erlandson 1986). When more detailed archaeological data is available, the prehistoric record of the Salinan will probably double in length to match those of their neighbors on the north, east, and south.

Artifacts in a few private collections indicate some use of manos and basin metates, typical forms more than 3,000 years ago in Chumash territory to the south. More common ground stone tools in Southern Salinan country were globular mortars and pestles, often found on terraces near springs or along small creeks. These artifacts probably occurred later than manos and metates. Chipped stone tools, including biface knives and projectile points, were made from local materials, often Franciscan or Monterey chert (Mason 1912). Obsidian was obtained in trade, usually from Owens Valley, and was already formed into biface knives.

Although, as noted above, little archaeological excavation has been carried out in Salinan territory, both living and work sites have been identified during surface surveys. These include large permanent villages, small seasonal sites, and stone quarrying workshops near outcrops of Monterey chert.

Obispeño Chumash
by Robert O. Gibson

The homeland of the Chumash groups extended from Malibu in Los Angeles County north to the Monterey County line, with an eastern boundary bordering much of the southern and western San Joaquin Valley. When people first entered the territory eventually occupied by the Chumash is unknown. It seems probable that small groups were moving into the area around 10,000 years ago. They left few traces; many locations where they may have camped or lived have been submerged by rising sea levels, covered over, or destroyed.

Chumash prehistory, better defined than that of the Salinan or of the Yokuts, has been divided into three major periods, Early, Middle, and Late. These divisions are based on general patterns of social, technological, and subsistence changes observable in the archaeological record (King 1990a).

Early Period: 9,000 to 2,500 B.P.

Although archaeological sites and materials are rare for the earliest people in present-day San Luis Obispo county, a good record has been established of villages and camps occupied 8,000 to over 9,000 years ago. Archaeological sites ranging from 7,000 to 9,300 B.P. have been identified in the coastal areas of Cambria (SLO-177), Cayucos (SLO-877), just south of Morro Bay (SLO-2, SLO-585), and Pismo Beach (SLO-801, SLO-832). Five of the sites are located next to streams; the sixth lies beside a spring (Table 1).

Table 1. Location of earliest sites in San Luis Obispo County.

Site Location, Trinomial	Date of Occupation	Site Setting	Reference
Cambria, SLO-177	8,200-8,400 B.P.	Knoll above spring	Gibson 1979
Cayucos, SLO-877	6,800-8,00 B.P.	Stream terrace	Breschini, personal communication
Pecho Coast, SLO-2	8,900-9,300 B.P.	Stream terrace	Greenwood 1972
Pecho Coast, SLO-2	7,300-8,400 B.P.	Stream terrace	Greenwood 1972
Shell Beach, SLO-801	7,200-8,600 B.P.	Stream terrace	Gibson 1981
Pismo Beach, SLO-832	6,500-8,500 B.P.	Stream terrace	Gibson 1982

All of these sites, except SLO-832, contain moderate to dense concentrations of faunal remains, burnt rock, and ground and chipped stone tools. At least three (SLO-2, SLO-177, SLO-585) include burials which may correspond with the early C^{14} dates. Site SLO-832 appears to contain lenses of whole shells in a natural sandy matrix, suggesting that the locus was used only seasonally.

By 4,000 to 5,000 years ago, the rise in sea level had slowed, and lower valleys began to fill with alluvial deposits, which helped to stabilize shorelines and create sandy beaches. Much of the rocky coast habitat in San Luis Obispo County was replaced with sand during this time. The deepest component of SLO-877, in Cayucos, dates to ca. 8,000 years B.P., and contains only rocky coast shellfish. The upper component, dating to around 5,000 B.P., holds only shellfish from sandy beaches.

Village and camp sites contain evidence of a well-adapted culture relying on both marine and terrestrial resources. Artifacts and food remains indicate that people living along the coast were fishing with bone hooks, sometimes using boats or rafts, and occasionally taking sea mammals and large fish. Deer and other animal bone, and stone points and knives, indicate the importance of hunting. Residential sites often contain small, flat grinding slabs, or metates, and manos used to process small seeds. Later in the period, larger, thicker metates, many with deep basins, were used to grind seeds, nuts, bulbs, and berries, as well as small animals.

Beads recovered indicate economic exchange throughout the area that became Chumash territory. During the later phases of the Early Period (5,500 to 3,000 B.P.), *Olivella* barrel beads became the dominant type (Fig. 2). These beads require additional grinding of the base and often

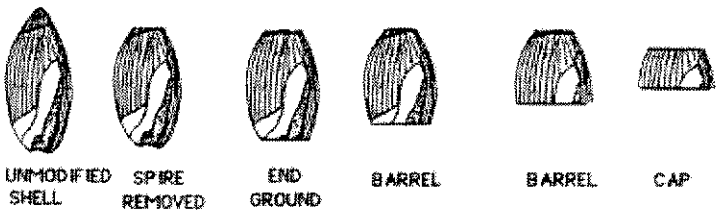


Figure 2. Idealized types of *Olivella* spire removed beads common in Southern California (Gibson 1992).

the spire of the *Olivella*, and the resulting higher cost of manufacturing suggests that they were used in economic contexts (King 1990a: Figure 3). The increasingly standardized size of *Olivella* barrels and of clam discs implies that these bead types were used in developing and revising economic exchange systems.

Middle Period: 2,500 to 1,000 B.P.

The end of the Early Period and beginning of the Middle Period occurred about 2,500 years B.P., and were marked by changes in ornaments and other artifacts. Distribution of these more elaborate ornaments indicates the development of hereditary control of political and economic power. Also, cemeteries at this time show a separation of political and religious authority, in distinctive burial patterns for chiefs and for priests or religious leaders.

Villages were becoming larger, with smaller, satellite settlements nearby. An important change in subsistence during the Middle Period was the increased use of acorns, which soon became a major resource. Millingstones gave way to mortars and pestles; large well-shaped "flower pot" mortars, so called because of their straight sides and flat bases, were typical during the Middle Period. Their rims were often grooved and inlaid with *Olivella* saucer beads in a tar mastic derived from asphaltum seeps along the coast.

The *Olivella* barrel and clam disc beads employed for currency in the Early Period became rare in the Middle Period, implying a major change in the utility of economic systems during the later time. The most common bead was the *Olivella* saucer, worn by village chiefs and other high-status individuals.

Towards the end of this period, projectile points shifted from large to small, reflecting a change common throughout California, ca. 1500 to 1300 years B.P. Spears and spear throwers (atlatls) were being replaced by bows and arrows. Small ovate convex base points were common into the Late Period, and then co-occurred with triangular concave base points until ca. 500 B.P., when the latter form predominated. Ovate forms with two or three small lateral notches have been identified in the northern half of San Luis Obispo County. These forms are rare to absent in Chumash territory south of the county, but were common in the latter parts of Phase 1 of the Late Period in some Central California sites (Fredrickson 1968:60).

Late Period: 1,000 B.P. to European Contact

Population expansion of two to five times during the Late Period brought an increase in both size and number of villages. Additionally, more small temporary camps were established near specific resources, such as yucca plants or sources of stone for bowls or tools.

About 1,000 years ago, a monetary system developed which was based on *Olivella biplicata* shell beads. Only one bead could be produced from a single, usually large, adult shell. Beads were chipped into a rough circular shape and holes drilled with bone, cactus spines, or blades of chert. They were then strung on milkweed fiber and ground on a sandstone slab until they were smooth, round, and the desired size. Strings of these beads served as money.

By 500 B.P. the amount of beads and other ornaments used by the Chumash indicates that their society was becoming even larger and more complex. The Chumash people appear to have been connected across their homeland by a network of political and religious leaders. Archaeological evidence suggests changes in the monetary system during the Late Period, perhaps demonstrating a thriving, growing economy. This period is marked by increased production and complexity in bead manufacturing, including a switch to the use of *Olivella* callus beads (cup, lip, and cylinder). As the Late Period progressed, beads became larger (i.e., less grinding time and cheaper to produce) and more numerous.

Table 2. Comparison of shellfish type by time period at San Simeon Creek, California.

Shellfish Type	A.D. 1500-1700 Percent of Total Weight	A.D. 1790-1800 Percent of Total Weight
Barnacle	11.1	3.9
Chiton	7.8	0
Crab	2.2	0
Crepidula sp.	0.1	0
Cryptochiton stelleri	7.3	1.1
Epilucina sp.	0.1	0
Pollicipes sp.	0.4	0
Haliotis sp.	6.4	16.8
Keyhole limpet	0.1	0
Limpet	3.7	0
Mytilus californianus	45.4	70.5
Protothaca sp.	0.6	0.2
Septifer bifurcatus	0.1	0
Tegula brunnea	1.5	0
Tegula funebralis	12.0	6.5
Nucella sp.	0.5	0
Tresus sp.	0.1	0.2

European Contact

Chumash society changed drastically soon after contact in 1769. The archaeological record at San Simeon Creek reflects the alteration of native culture in San Luis Obispo County. Two adjacent sites, SLO-221 and SLO-1373, Loci A, B, and C, represent discrete periods and illustrate subsistence patterns and technology of the Chumash at San Simeon Creek both before the arrival of Europeans and during the first interactions between these two cultures (Gibson 1992). Time spans represented at these sites are:

Pre-Spanish contact--A.D. 1000-1769
(SLO-221, SLO-11373, Locus A)

San Luis Obispo Mission contact--1774-1797
(SLO-1373, Loci A, B)

San Miguel contact to American Period--1830-1850
(SLO-1373, Locus C)

Evidence of food processing (mortars, pestles, burnt rock, shell) as well as of fishing and hunting, and the presence of shell beads, suggest that both sites were villages. The following graphs and tables illustrate the changes in shellfish exploitation, hunting and fishing, and stone tool manufacture at these sites from pre-contact through the Mission Period.

Table 3. Comparison of bone by time period at San Simeon Creek, California.

Provenience	General Date	Maximum Bone Density #/m³	Maximum Bone Wt. (Grams)/m³
SLO-1373 B Unit 1	A.D. 1790-1800	3066	616.2
SLO-1373 A Unit 4	A.D. 1000-1780	8272	99.0
SLO-221 Unit 1	A.D. 1500-1650	7686	124.6

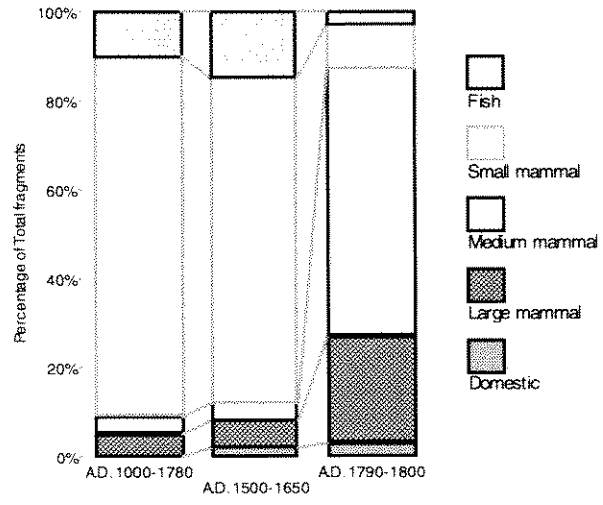


Figure 3. Comparison of bone category by time period at San Simeon Creek, California.

Approximately thirty types of shellfish have been identified from prehistoric components at SLO-383 (5,800--4,300 years B.P.) and at SLO-187 (2,600--1,000 B.P.). At SLO-221 and SLO-1373, Locus A, only about seventeen types were identified. In SLO-1373, Locus B, occupied when San Luis Obispo Mission was recruiting locally, however, the number of utilized shellfish types drops to only about seven species (Table 2). There is a much greater reliance on a single species, *Mytilus*, which accounts for 70 percent (by weight) of the shell.

As the Spaniards introduced domestic animals and plants into the diet of the Chumash, consumption of small mammals and fish decreased. This pattern, like that described above for shellfish, shows less reliance on traditional foods and reduced diversity in diet (Table 3, Fig. 3).

Table 4. Comparison of chipped stone by time periods at San Simeon Creek, California.

Tool Type	SLO-1373 Locus A A.D. 100-1500	SLO-221 A.D. 1500-1650	SLO-1373 Locus B A.D. 1790-1800	SLO-1373 Locus C A.D. 1800-1830
Core	0	1	0	1
Biface	5	1	1	0
Flake Knife	1	3	0	0
Flake Scraper	1	3	1	0
Flakes (m^3)	940	341	80	10

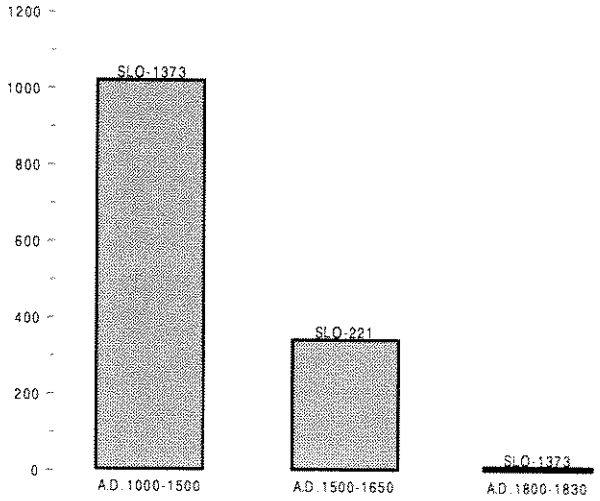


Figure 4. Comparison of stone flakes by time period at San Simeon Creek, California.

Two items most requested by the Chumash from the Spaniards were metal knives, for butchering, and adze blades, for working wood. Also highly prized were needles for drilling holes in shell beads. The availability of metal meant less reliance on traditional stone flaking to produce biface knives and other tools. Table 4 and Fig. 4 illustrate the decrease in flake density and stone tools at San Simeon Creek after the arrival of the Spaniards, as metal replaced stone in the Chumash culture.

The disruption of subsistence bases and traditional technology added to the devastation of Chumash society by mission life and European diseases. By 1805, most of the villages were abandoned.

Figure 5. Ethnographic Language Areas with Selected Villages. Courtesy Far Western Anthropological Research Group.

ETHNOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

Southern Valley Yokuts

The Devil's Den area, at the start of Reach I, has been included in the territory of the Tachi (Kroeber 1925:484, Plate 47; Gayton 1948:7), who were apparently "one of the largest of all Yokuts divisions" (Kroeber 1925:484). They lived on the northern and western shores of Tulare Lake (Fig. 5), also utilizing the arid land to the west. Two other groups made their homes on the lake shore: the Chunut to the east and Wowol to the southeast (Kroeber 1925:483-484, Plate 47; Gayton 1948:Map 2). The people of the lake, in marshy terrain and remote from the coastal missions, had some protection from Euro-American incursion and were able to continue their lifeways longer than many native groups.

The Tachi, Chunut, and Wowol enjoyed abundant resources from the lake and its adjoining swamps and sloughs. Fish and waterfowl were plentiful (cf. Latta 1977:504, 508), and marsh plants, such as cattail, provided seeds. Great stands of tules, from which Tulare Lake took its name, were used for their edible roots and especially for manufacture. Tules furnished material for baskets, cradles, clothing, houses, household furnishings, and boats or rafts (Kroeber 1925:521-522, 531-534, 536; Gayton 1948:17, 21; Latta 1976:85, 87-89, 92).

Three kinds of dwellings, all made with tules, have been described for the people of Tulare Lake. The simplest was made in the growing tules:

> While we were at the lake, I noticed one or two houses that have ever been more or less of a puzzle to me. They were built in the standing tules and seemed to be woven from the living tules as they stood in place. They were dome-shaped and were about ten feet in diameter.... (Jeff Mayfield, quoted in Latta 1976:85).
>
> Both my mothers's people and my father's people made a house of green tules. It was a small round house. They made these houses in the tules near the water when they would only stay a little while. They called this kind of house *tumlus* (toom-loos).
>
> Tumlus was a good dry house from the rain, but it was bad from the bottom. They just cut some tules away inside, and pulled the other tules together at the top. They tied the tops to a piece of green oak limb bent round like a ring. You could never see these houses in the tules until you came right up to them.
>
> The worst thing about the tumlus house was the lake. They always were close to the water and the ground was wet. When the wind blew, the lake water would come into them (Yoimut, of Chunut-Wowol descent, quoted in Latta 1977:701).

On drier land, the Tachi and their neighbors built a small, oblong, single-family house. Two rows of willow poles were bent and tied over a ridge beam, supported by a forked post at either end of the structure (Kroeber 1925:521-522; Gayton 1948:13; Latta 1977:142). "Large mats of tule were hung on the frame and pegged to the ground. A slot was left along the center beam for the smoke to escape" (Gayton 1948:13).

> The tule mats that I have mentioned .... were made in two ways. Some were tied together with tule by a series of half hitches. The tules were laid out on the ground parallel to each other and close together. Then about every foot or so they were tied together by cross tules and the half hitches.
>
> Other mats were laid out in the same way, and a milkweed string was passed through them. Holes were punched in the tules by means of a bone awl, and the string was run through the holes. These mats were used for floor coverings and mattresses, as I have mentioned, and for many other purposes.
>
> At the lake, a light framework of driftwood was set up and the tule mats were laid over it to provide a flat-topped shade (Jeff Mayfield, quoted in Latta 1976:87).

The third type of dwelling, a communal house, was constructed like the one-family shelter. A series of forked posts and ridge poles supported a willow framework, which was covered with tule mats. Rooms within the long house were separated by mats (Gayton 1948:13).

> The houses at the lake were the thing I noticed most.... Generally they were built of tule mats and were quite long. Some of them were at least one hundred feet long. A sort of wooden ridge, erected on cross poles, was set in the ground, and the tule mats were leaned against it (Jeff Mayfield, quoted in Latta 1976:85).
>
> In the long tule house each family had its own door. You could not go through the next place unless you knew it was all right. We just opened the tule mats for a door. We did not have a round smoke hole in the long house. The tule mats did not reach to the top (Yoimut, of Chunut-Wowol descent, quoted in Latta 1977:704).

The people of Tulare Lake built large tule rafts and boats, or balsas, for transportation (cf. Latta 1977:716-719), and smaller rafts for fishing and hunting.

> This raft...was wide and flat and would pass over very shallow water. It was pointed at the ends....In the center of the fishing raft was a large hole. Through this hole fish were gigged....The fisherman lay on his stomach with his head and shoulders over this hole, and covered with a tule mat so he could not be seen by the fish and so he could see into the water. A few feet ahead of the hole was an earthen or mud hearth. On this hearth a fire was kindled and here the cooking was done.
>
> Sometimes three or four Indians would go out on the lake on one of the fishing rafts and hunt ducks and geese and stay out there as long as a week. During this time they poled the raft around through the tules and ate and slept on it. They would throw loose tules over the raft, forming a blind. Then, through the hole in the center they would slowly pole the raft wherever they wanted to go. In this way they would approach within a few feet of ducks and geese and shoot them from the blind with bows and arrows.
>
> Sometimes in a net they would catch the ducks that flew overhead. This net was a good deal like the net fishermen now use to take trout out of the water after they

> have hooked them. It was about two feet across at the mouth. They also snared ducks and geese among the tules (Jeff Mayfield, quoted in Latta 1976:88-89).

The marshes around the lake supplied other food resources, including turtles, freshwater mussels, and the eggs of waterfowl (Wallace 1978:450). Elk and antelope were hunted with bow and arrow "from blinds when they came to the lake to water." On the dry, brushy plains beyond the lake, the Yokuts snared squirrels and small foxes, and took rabbits both by snaring and in communal drives (Jeff Mayfield, quoted in Latta 1976:89, 91-93).

Families around Tulare Lake belonged, not only to the Tachi, Chunut, or Wowol groups, but to individual villages. They were also affiliated with one of two totemic lineages: "A totem symbol peculiar to his paternal line was transmitted by a father to all his children; it was an animal or bird that no member would kill or eat and that was dreamed of and prayed to" (Wallace 1978:452-453). The Tachi belonged either to an East or West moiety, depending on their totem animal. Each moiety provided a chief for its village; the two chiefs had equal authority, with precedence, however, being given to a descendant of the Eagle line (Wallace 1978:453-454). Moieties often teamed against each other in the lake people's games, which included "shinny, ball or stick races, and hoop and pole contests" (Wallace 1978:456).

At the Yokuts' great ritual gathering, the annual mourning for the dead, moieties provided reciprocal aid (Kroeber 1925:495, 500). The *Lonewis*, mourning ceremonies of the people around Tulare Lake, lasted six days, with special dances, singing, a mock battle of medicine men, the burning of effigy figures of the dead and valuable goods, and ritual washing and dressing, signifying the end of grieving (Gayton 1948:43-45; Latta 1977:674-683). "All of the time until the Lonewis was over, all day and all night, someone was singing, someone was crying, someone was dancing" (Yoimut, of Chunut-Wowol descent, quoted in Latta 1977:677).

The Tachi, Chunut, and Wowol were apparently on good terms with other Yokut groups, and belonged to an extensive trade network in the valley. The Tachi traded to the east for obsidian and soapstone beads and gathered local fish, salt grass salt, and seeds to barter with coastal people. Traders from the coast brought shell beads and the shells of abalone, clam, and *Olivella* (Latta 1977:311, 729).

> The bead and seashell traders from the coast met with the Tache traders at Poza Chana. The Tache and the other Indians would not let the people from the west come right up to the lake. They were afraid they would learn how to get things without trading....each one took his basket down and spread his things on the ground in front of him. The rows of things were about ten feet apart. Then the trade started. The Teahs [chiefs] did all of the talking for their people. They talked to each other and agreed how much each could have. It was all done by rules (Yoimut, of Chunut-Wowol descent, quoted in Latta 1977:728-729).

Poza Chana, where the trading took place, was originally *Udgeu*, a Tachi village on Warthan Creek south of present-day Coalinga (Latta 1977:141, 731). The names of four other Tachi villages on the west side of Tulare Lake have been recorded: "*Chi* or *Hinlen Chi* west of the mouth of the Kings River, *Golon* at the contemporary settlement of Huron...*Walnau* on the west shore of Tulare Lake near Kettleman city....[and] a settlement at Polvardera, southeast of Coalinga, known as *Sawkeu*...." (McCarthy 1993:18-19).

The Tachi obtained asphaltum from what is now the Coalinga field and other seeps, including those at Devil's Den. Among the materials found at KER-152, a Yokuts village site less than a mile north of the Devil's Den field, were numerous artifacts of asphaltum, including balls (about the size of a baseball) prepared for transportation and trading (Latta 1949:222, 243). Asphaltum had many uses in Yokuts manufacture:

> Baskets were made waterproof--chunks of asphaltum and hot rocks were placed inside baskets and shaken together, lining the interior with a coating of asphaltum. Arrow points and stone knives were fastened to shafts and the binding sinews made waterproof by a coating of asphaltum. Broken soapstone cooking vessels were mended with asphaltum. Beads, bits of abalone shell, and other ornaments were fastened to ceremonial mortars and staffs, dice, masks, and numerous other objects (Latta 1949:20).

Both crude oil and asphaltum were used in healing and in the observance of mourning (Latta 1949:240-241).

It seems highly probable that the village represented by KER-152 was, like Pozo Chana, a center for trade to the west. The village site lay close to the convergence of two major trails established by native peoples. "The old West Side Indian Trace" was a major route along the foothills of the San Joaquin Valley, west of and roughly paralleling today's Highway 33 (Latta 1936:10, map, 1977:314-316). From this route, a trail ran north through Cottonwood Pass, then west through Cholame Valley, along much of what is now Highway 41 to Santa Margarita, and southwest to San Luis Obispo (Pollard 1971:45-46; Latta 1977:314, 316). Other trails in the area led over Polonio Pass, on present-day Highway 46, and along Cholame Road, through Palo Prieto Pass and east on Bitterwater Valley Road (Latta 1936:10, 1977:315).

The network of Yokuts trails, which had facilitated trade and travel among the Yokuts and their neighbors, also aided Euro-Americans in their penetration of the San Joaquin Valley. Soon after the arrival of the Spanish missionary expedition to California in 1769, the valley became a refuge. Its distance from the missions and the cover provided by dense tule swamps drew deserters from the Spanish garrisons and an increasing number of escaping neophytes. Father Francisco Garces, encountering a group of Yokuts on the White River east of Tulare Lake recorded in May 1776:

> ...there came to me one, and begged of me in Spanish (*Castilla*) paper wherewith to make cigars. I wondered much, and on questioning him he told me that he was from the sea where there are padres like myself; that in four parts had he seen Españoles, and that it was distant from here a four days' journey. When he took to kiss the Santo Cristo, he did so with great veneration, and set himself to preach to the rest. I had a suspicion that he might be some Christian who had just fled from the missions of Monte-Rey, since he made signs of shooting and flogging (Coues 1900, I:287).

Deserters and fugitive neophytes were soon followed by both military and missionary expeditions, attempting to capture those who had fled and to obtain, by persuasion or force, more mission converts.

> [From Governor Fages, November 7, 1785]: That Sebastian Albitre ran away and with him the soldier of the Presidio, Marianio Ypez...that he sent out two parties to chase them as far as the Sierra Nevada; these parties returned because their horses were badly exhausted; the pursuit will be continued in June (quoted in Cook 1960:241).
>
> [Fray Juan Martin, describing a visit to Bubal, or Wowol, in November 1804]: There arrived a heathen, whom I took to be the chief. As the reason for my coming was made clear to him, which was to make them Sons of God, my request affected him very badly. He began to rail against the soldiers and their weapons in such a crazy fashion that the poor people who had given me their children, probably scared, fled in a body and I was left with no one....Finally I went home quite disappointed at having lost, because of one villain, such a harvest for Heaven (quoted in Cook 1960:244).
>
> [From the report of Second Lieutenant Luis Arguello, noted in June 25, 1805]: Second Lieutenant Arguello set out on the expedition with twenty-two men and returned on the 15th of July bringing with him twenty-two Indian renegades (thirteen Christians and 9 heathen) (quoted in Cook 1960:244).

The stable and abundant world of the Tulare Lake people fragmented as more converts were rounded up and expeditions to their homeland became increasingly punitive:

> [Fray Jaun Cabot's report, June 1, 1816, on the attack of Bubal by soldiers accompanying Father Luis Martinez]: [The soldiers] suddenly broke out in violence along the edge of the tule swamps. They tried to stop the people from escaping but, since that was not possible, they dragged out all they could with lassos and ropes and drove them into the village. In terror, many people, principally women and children, tried to jump into the water. These were then held back with clubs and the infants were thrown either into the water or onto the ground....the Indians said that the troops had burned their village, scattered their grain, and smashed their jars and grinding stones....(quoted in Cook 1960:272).

Refugees told of the mission herds of cattle and horses, or had actually escaped to the valley on horseback. An 1815 expedition, for example, found at a Tachi village "three horses, one from San Miguel and two from Soledad, formerly in possession of the fugitives" (Juan Ortega, quoted in Cook 1960:267). The Yokuts, including the people of Tulare Lake, were essentially fighting a guerilla war for survival, and one highly successful tactic was raids on mission and rancho livestock (cf. Cook 1962:193). The horses served for riding, food, and trade to other groups (Cook 1962).

Euro-Americans and fugitives from the missions, however, introduced diseases to which the Yokuts had no resistance; an epidemic, probably of malaria, swept the valley in 1833, wiping out whole villages (Cook 1955). When American settlers arrived in the Tulare Lake area in the late 1840s, the native people, their population dwindled and their culture disrupted, could not defend their homeland.

In 1851, the Tachi, Chunut, and Wowol ceded their land to the United States in exchange for reservations and supplies; the treaty was never ratified. They were taken to Tejon, then to Tule

River; a reservation was also established for the Tachi at present-day Lemoore (Wallace 1978:460).

Many people left the reservations, however, and took jobs on the ranches in the valley, or lived as they could in the old way. Around 1865, for example, a group of Wowol and Chunut were living at Chawlowin on Atwell's Island, now Alpaugh. Some "had come back to that camp from Tule River Reservation, where the soldiers had taken them from Tejon Ranch." They hid in the tules, making shelters in the green plants (above), and subsisting on the resources of the island: fishing, hunting, gathering tule roots (Yoimut, of Chunut-Wowol descent, quoted in Latta 1977:720).

> While we were at Chawloin some white men put cattle on the island. The water was low and they drove them across from the east. There were hogs there already, but they were wild. As soon as the white people found out we were there we began to have trouble. The tules were getting dry and we were afraid the white people would burn us out. So we all left (Yoimut, of Chunut-Wowol descent, quoted in Latta 1977:722).

The Tachis, Chunuts, and Wowols, despite their dispersion and the inevitable adaptations to Euro-American culture, continued until after the turn of the century to observe their ceremonies, especially the *Lonewis*, and to use many of their subsistence skills. In the late 1920s, a few old people were able to recall for ethnographers the time when the dry bed of Tulare Lake was a green and provident world for the many villages on its shores.

Southern (Migueleño) Salinan

The Salinan homeland (Fig. 5) was affected far more immediately by Spanish incursion than was the country of the Tulare Lake Yokuts (above). Two missions--San Antonio and San Miguel--a well traveled Spanish route through their country, and post-secularization ranchos all disrupted the lives of the Salinan people. Spanish missionaries and soldiers left only scant descriptions of these people, whose lifeways were quickly altered by missionization. Further information on Salinan culture was provided from ca. 1910 to 1936 by elderly Antoniaño and Migueleño who, although they were devoutly attached to missions, spoke their own dialects and knew something of "how it was" (cf. Mason 1912; Harrington 1985). More recently, Robert O. Gibson's careful research in mission records has documented the location, approximate population, and relationship to other settlements of numerous Salinan villages (Gibson 1983).

The territory of the Southern Salinan, or Migueleño, extended east-west from the Diablo Range to the Coast Range, with coastal access north of San Carpoforo Creek, and north-south from slightly above modern-day Bradley to an area just north of Paso Robles. Three major villages have been identified for these people. *Etsmal* was located west of Bradley, near the Migueleño-Antoniaño boundary (Gibson 1983:180, 239-240; Harrington 1985:R1. 88, Fr. 0450). The dialects of the two groups were mutually intelligible, and they apparently shared resources. *Tisagues*, near the southern edge of Migueleño territory, was situated close to the present Cholame store, on Highway 46 (Gibson 1983:180, 244-245).

Cholaam, the largest of the Migueleño villages, was located in the area of the Jack Ranch headquarters, and apparently included a group of settlements (cf. Gibson 1983:119). The chief of *cholaam* in 1803 was referred to as "the chief of all the villages thereabouts" (Cook

1960:243). Pedro Fages, a lieutenant on the first Spanish expedition through Salinan country (below), observed that, "Besides their chiefs of villages, they have in every district another one who commands four or five villages together, the village chiefs being his subordinates" (Priestley 1972:58, 73).

Like many native people of California, however, the Salinan moved in and out of their home villages as different resources became available. Members of the first and second Spanish expeditions (1769 and 1770), traveling from San Diego to Monterey and San Francisco, recorded village locations and populations. Fray Juan Crespi, who kept the fullest account of the journeys, noted of the people the Spaniards encountered in the Santa Lucia Range:

> (September 17, 1769, confluence of San Carpoforo and Dutra Creeks) We have a village here of very good, poor heathens (there must be some eighty of them) who, though not settled here but belonging a bit further away, came over as soon as they saw our scouts and that we were on the way to stopping here, and brought all of their gear and women and children, in order to make the march with us when we start toward their village, which they say lies along the way we are to take.
>
> (September 20, 1769, Pozo Hondo Creek) Having reached here we were visited by five big villages of very tractable friendly heathens that said they had their villages in the immediate vicinity. Some, they say, are shore dwellers, others mountaineers belonging to this range, and still others from a river that they say is near by, with a harbor, and that we guess to be the Carmelo River (The six or seven villages we guessed to be at least about 600 souls; they presented us with a great many pine nuts). A great many pine trees with very good large pine nuts, and a great many white and live oaks commence onward beyond this spot.
>
> (December 18, 1769, Pozo Hondo Creek) We halted at this spot, not having seen a single heathen of the great many who gathered at this place on the way coming and presented us with a great many pine nuts (it being a place that has them).
>
> (May 17, 1770, confluence of San Carpoforo and Dutra Creeks) We saw, on coming down to this spot, two houses belonging to the village of very fine folk that exist throughout these mountains; we did not see a single heathen, because, it must be, they are gathering their seeds (Brown 1991, 1994).

Along with pine nuts, seasonal plant foods harvested by the Salinan included: three kinds of acorns; buckeye nuts; the *islay*, or wild cherry, used both for its meat and its seed; madrone berries; seeds of the chia sage; grass seeds (Priestley 1972:59-60, 68); manzanita, toyon, and laurel berries; wild potatoes (Harrington 1985: R1. 84, Frs. 0155, 0156, 0162, 0231).

The Salinan hunted deer with bow and arrow, at times using the deerhead decoy, and trapped deer as well as small animals, such as rabbits and squirrels (Harrington 1985: R1. 84, Frs. 0228, 0231, 0268, 0345; R1. 87, Frs. 0399, 0536). They fished for both riverine and ocean-going species, and gathered shellfish (Harrington 1985: R1. 84, Frs. 0179-0181, 0262-0264, 0345, 0360, 0377; cf. R1. 87, 0002-0124).

Descriptions of Salinan houses vary from a 10-foot square (Mason 1912:126) to round (Harrington 1985: R1. 87, Fr. 0431) to conical (Harrington 1985: R1. 84, Fr. 0002). All were

noted as being constructed with willow poles and thatched with tule. Pacifico Archuleta, an elderly Migueleño interviewed in 1912-1913, remarked that "houses were made of tule in the Tular, and also here on the coast," referring to the Migueleño refuge community near Cayucos (below) (Harrington 1985: R1. 84, 0221).

The influence of the Yokuts, people of the "Tular," on Salinan lifeways is evident in ethnographic times, when Yokuts were included in mission populations at both San Antonio and San Miguel. How much the Salinan and the San Joaquin Valley people influenced each other before the arrival of the Spaniards is unknown. In a long-established trade network, the Salinan traveled to the western edge of the Southern Yokuts homeland to exchange their shells and shell beads for obsidian and other materials (Southern Yokuts, above; Latta 1977:311; Gibson 1983:91).

The lives of the Southern Salinan were altered by the passage of the Spaniards through their country and by the founding of Mission San Antonio in 1771, but drastic change did not occur until the establishment of Mission San Miguel in 1797. Only two Southern Salinan individuals, for examples, were baptized at San Antonio. Twenty-one were baptized at San Miguel in 1797 (Gibson 1983:168); and by December, 1804, "the mission family consisted of 466 male and 462 female Indians, or 928 in all..." (Engelhardt 1929b:9). Although San Miguel's population included Yokuts and Northern Chumash, 828 Southern Salinan persons were baptized between 1797 and 1816. Among these converts were 318 individuals from *cholaam*, 126 from *etsmal*, and 71 from *tisagues* (Gibson 1983:168, 213).

Life for the neophytes at San Miguel, as throughout the missions, was centered around the church and work:

> A half hour after sunrise they gather in the church to hear Mass during which they recite the catechism in their own language having taken their breakfast of *atole* [gruel] before. From church they go to their houses to fetch the tools they need to perform their labors until 10:30 A.M. After this they take dinner which consists of wheat, Indian corn, peas or cooked beans. They then rest until 2 o'clock (in summer until 3). They then continue working until an hour before sunset after which they take atole, return to the church to recite the catechism and sing the *Alabado*...When the church services are over they return to their homes (Geiger and Meighan 1976:82).

Some of the Southern Salinan resisted missionization; others tried life at San Miguel, and left. In both cases, the zeal of the fathers was often reenforced by Spanish soldiers. A report dated January 29, 1804 from Jose de la Guerra, military commander in Monterey, deals with proselytizing and the pursuit of fugitive neophytes. It is difficult to imagine a sharper contrast than that between the encounter described here and the welcome extended by the Salinan to the first Spanish expedition (above).

> ...Father Juan Martin, minister of San Miguel, protected by one soldier, went to a village called Cholam and asked the chief of all the villages thereabouts, named Guchapa, to give him some children to baptize. This was refused by the chief, who told the Father and the soldiers to get out or it would go badly with them, for he 'was not afraid of the soldiers, who were cowards, and he knew with certainty that they would die like everyone else.' Commandant Guerra sent a sergeant, a

> corporal, and thirteen soldiers to take the chief, Guchapa, prisoner. The expedition set out December 22. It returned January 10 bringing as captives Chief Guchapa, his son, two other chieftains, and two Christians...
>
> The commandant continues, saying that Guchapa made the proposition that he would bring out all the Christian Indians there were in his villages. This was accepted and he left his son as hostage....(Cook 1960:243).

Mission San Miguel, which recognized "no boundaries whatever" to the east, took the land around Guchapa's villages, as part of Rancho Cholame, into the mission's vast holdings. The eastern country, described as "*una pura miseria*" by the friars, also included Ranchos Estrella and Huer Huero, and was used for intermittent grazing (Engelhardt 1929b:27, 335).

Livestock required much of the neophytes' work at San Miguel. In 1827, the mission herds consisted of "2130 cattle, 120 oxen, 7904 sheep and 62 pigs" (Engelhardt 1929b:29). The converts also labored in the extensive grain fields to the south, at Ranchos Paso de Robles and Asuncion (around present-day Atascadero) and to the west at Rancho San Simeon (Engelhardt 1929b:28).

In one generation, between the founding of San Miguel and the secularization of the missions in 1834, the lifeways of the Southern Salinan were fragmented. Like convert populations throughout the mission system, they lost most of their people to forced work, changed diet, crowded quarters, and especially to the introduction of European diseases. Nonmissionized natives were also swept away by disease (cf. Gibson 1983:35). Hunting and gathering were replaced by stock-raising and agriculture.

The secularization decree of 1834 provided for distribution of a portion of each mission's land and goods to its Christianized natives, to help establish them as independent citizens. San Miguel's converts asked to keep land on the western ranchos, including Paso de Robles, Asuncion, and San Simeon, all of which had buildings and grain fields. They were willing to give up the eastern lands: Cholame, Huer Huero, and Estrella (Engelhardt 1929b:35). By 1845, all of San Miguel's ranches had been granted to Mexican citizens, except for land on the Estrella, which was granted to the people of San Miguel in 1844. Their claim to this land was rejected by the U.S. courts (Cowan 1977:17, 35, 40, 68, 93, 95).

A few of the Migueleño farmed on the Estrella into the 1860s (cf. Eighth U.S. Census, San Luis Obispo County, P. 9; Harrington 1985:R. 88, Frs. 0492, 0510, 0512). Many, however, went out to the coast, working on ranches near the former mission *asistencia* at San Simeon, on the Estrada Ranch near Cambria, and further south (Harrington 1985:R. 84, Fr. 0004). The largest settlement was established on Rafael Villa's Rancho San Geronimo, four miles north of Cayucos. Antonio Durazo, an elderly Migueleño, observed that "The Migueleño Indians, having been run off elsewhere, found a sort of refuge on the Villa ranch, and had a big rancheria there" (Harrington 1985:R88, Fr. 0565).

It is possible that Rafael Villa's acquaintance with the Migueleño and what appears to be his compassion for them derive from his own Salinan heritage. His grandfather, a Mexican soldier, married an Antoniaño; Villa was born at Mission San Antonio.

Villa began building at Rancho San Geronimo in 1839 (Bancroft Library 1852, Land Case 61 SD:8; Agnew and Agnew 1990:4-5). The Migueleño who came to work for him lived in two worlds. As at the mission, they built, herded stock, cultivated fields, and wove cloth. Their village however, was made of conical pole-and-tule houses, and included a sweathouse and a large area for traditional dancing (Harrington 1985:R.84, Fr. 0220, 0221, 1986:R.2, Frs. 0717, 0756). Dancers from the Yokuts and Obispeño [Northern Chumash] joined the Migueleño for fiestas. Rosario Cooper, an Obispeño singer, recalled attending one of these gala events as a child, when she "heard the Tachis coming down the canyon. Captains ahead, then men and many women behind. They came slapping hands over mouths as they came. They danced some, then soon ate and then danced" (Harrington 1986:R.2, Fr. 0717).

At some time in the 1860s, ownership of Rancho San Geronimo passed to Rafael Villa's son, Roberto. It is evident that the Migueleño continued some of the old ways, including the big dances, at their village on the ranch (cf. Harrington 1985:R.87, Frs. 0026-0027; 1986:R. 1, Fr. 0211, R. 2, Frs. 0704, 0757-0758). The settlement was listed in the 1870 census. By 1874, however, the ranch had been divided; it is doubtful that the village remained into the 1880s, as the land was increasingly subdivided (San Luis Obispo County Historical Museum Map Files; cf. Angel 1883). By the first part of the twentieth century, the Migueleño were scattered on ranches in their homeland and along the coast.

Northern (Obispeño) Chumash

The Obispeño, named for Mission San Luis Obispo, were the northernmost group of the large Chumash cultural family. With the exception of about three miles between San Carpoforo Creek and the county line, their homeland extended along the entire coast of present-day San Luis Obispo County (Fig. 5). San Carpoforo Creek formed a rough northern boundary between the Obispeño and their Salinan neighbors (Harrington 1985: Rl. 84, Fr. 0004, Rl. 87, Fr. 0835; Greenwood 1978:520; King 1982a, 1982b, 1990a:35; Gibson 1983; Farris 1986:84-85; Jones and Waugh 1993; Rivers and Jones 1993:147). To the south, Obispeño country bordered that of the Purismeño Chumash in the vicinity of the Santa Maria River (cf. Greenwood 1978:522; Siefkin 1994:9). Inland, the northeastern boundary between the Obispeño and the Salinan was situated near modern Paso Robles and Shandon (Gibson 1983:180, 244-245; Rivers and Jones 1993:147). To the south, in the upper reaches of the Carrizo Plain, Obispeño country neighbored that of the Southern Yokuts (Wallace 1978:448; Gibson 1983:180; Rivers and Jones 1993:147).

Three diaries from the first Spanish expedition into California, in 1769-1770, provide brief glimpses of the Obispeño. Gaspar de Portola, leader of the expedition, kept a journal, as did Engineer Miguel Costanso and Fray Juan Crespi. All wrote in detail about the Chumash population to the south, particularly along the Channel, where the travelers noted large villages. "There stood an Indian village which must have contained more than a thousand souls....We arrived at the stopping place, which was a town of eighty houses and about eight hundred souls" (Costanso 1911:45).

Once in Obispeño country, however, the Spaniards saw far fewer people. Costanso noted two villages near present-day Guadalupe Lake: "the one small and miserable, the other larger, being composed of several small houses" (Costanso 1911:55). The expedition continued north, and in the vicinity of Price Canyon, Portola wrote "Along the whole way we met with no more than one poor, small-sized heathen village; this country is rather empty" (Boneu Companys 1983:203). The villagers brought the members of the expedition a gift of seeds and fish. In Los Osos

Canyon:

> Not far from our lodgings was a small-sized, wretched heathen village, scarcely amounting to sixty souls living in the open without house or hearth. They came over to visit us, offering us a sort of gruel made out of parched seeds which we all thought tasted well, with a flavor of almonds (Boneu Companys 1983:206).

The largest group of native people encountered in the Obispeño homeland came to the returning expedition's camp near modern Cambria on Christmas Eve. Father Crespi noted that "...more than two hundred heathen of both sexes came to visit us in this place...many of them came with good baskets of pinole and some fish...their gifts were returned with beads, which pleased them greatly" (Bolton 1927:258).

Roberta Greenwood, in her thoughtful discussion of the Obispeño and Purismeño, suggests that their country was "an area once populous, which had already begun to decline" when the Spanish explorers encountered these groups. She notes the wealth of archaeological sites in San Luis Obispo County; some of the large villages had obviously been abandoned before historic contact (Greenwood 1978:520-523).

Pedro Fages, a lieutenant on the first expedition, did not keep a diary of the trip but relied on his observations, then and soon after, to describe Obispeño lifeways. Serving as military commander of Upper California from July, 1770 until May, 1774, Fages wrote that, "I busied myself for a long period of more than four years with all possible determination and diligence in reconnoitering those remote provinces in person, gathering information concerning whatever was conducive to a practical knowledge of them." This knowledge included "the religion and customs of uncivilized tribes" (Fages 1972:1). Fages had a particularly good opportunity to observe the people of the Obispeño country. In the spring of 1772, he and a group of his soldiers spent several weeks near present-day San Luis Obispo, hunting bears to provide meat for settlements at Monterey and Mission San Antonio. The Spaniards traded meat to the Obispeño for plant foods; "...the Indians showed themselves grateful, because their territory had been delivered from those fierce animals, which had killed many Indians; indeed not a few of the Indians, although they survived, still bore the marks of the terrible claws" (Engelhardt 1933:13, 17; Priestley 1972:x).

Fages' description of Obispeño culture, included in a 1775 report on California, is incomplete and in part generalized, but provides more firsthand information on pre-Mission lifeways in this area than does any other account:

> At the mission of San Luis Obispo and for a radius of about twelve leagues around it, I have observed the following: The natives are well appearing, of good disposition, affable, liberal, and friendly toward the Spaniard. As to their government, it is by captaincies over villages, as in the others; the captains here also have many wives, with the right of putting them away and taking maidens only; here also the other Indian men do not have this privilege, for they have only one wife, and do not marry a second time, until they are widowed. They have cemeteries set apart for the burial of their dead. The god whom they adore, and to whom they offer their seeds, fruits, and all that they possess, is the sun....Their houses, shaped like half globes, are neatly built; each one is capable of sheltering four or five families which, being kin, are accustomed to live together. The

houses have one door on the east, and one on the west, with a skylight in the roof, halfway between. Their beds are built up high on bed-steads, which are here called *tapextles*, of heavy sticks; a reed mat serves as a mattress; and four others as curtains, forming a bedroom....

....The women wear toupes [bangs] made by burning, and their coiffure is of shells....Both men and women like to go painted with various colors, the former especially when they go on a campaign, and the latter when they are having a festal occasion, to give a dance.

When an Indian woman is in childbirth, she makes a small hole wherever she may be when her labor begins, even though it may be in the open field; she digs out the soil, puts in a little hay or grass neatly arranged, warms the hole with fire, of which she always carries a supply ready, and composes herself tranquilly to give birth. She removes from her child the envelope and adhesions bestowed by nature, strokes it, and deforms the cartilaginous part of the nose by flattening; then she goes without delay to bathe herself with cold water, whereupon the entire operation is completed without further ceremony. The child is then swaddled from the feet to the shoulders with a band to shape its body; thus enveloped, it is fastened against a coffin-shaped board, which the Indian woman carries suspended from her shoulders by cords; she takes the child in her arms without removing it from the frame every time she needs to give it milk, or to soothe it if it cries....

It is not to be denied that this land exceeds all the preceding territory in fertility and abundance of things necessary for sustenance. All the seeds and fruits which these natives use, and which have been previously mentioned, grow here and in the vicinity in native profusion. There is a great deal of century plant of the species which the Mexicans call *mescali*. The mode of using it is as follows: They make a hole in the ground, fill it in compactly with large firewood which they set on fire and then throw on top a number of stones until the entire fire is covered but not smothered. When the stones are red hot, they place among them the bud of the plant; this they protect with grass or moistened hay, throwing on top a large quantity of earth, leaving it so for the space of twenty-four hours. The next day they take out their century plant roasted, or *tlatemado*, as they say. It is juicy, sweet, and of a certain vinous flavor; indeed a very good wine can be made of it.

They use the root of a kind of reed of which they have a great abundance [tule; cf. King 1990b:9]; cleansing the earth from it, and crushing it in their mortars, they then spread it in the sun to dry; when it is dry they again moisten it, removing all the fibrous part until only the flour is left. From this they make a gruel and a very sweet, nourishing flour. At the beginning of the rainy season, which, as in Spain, occurs in the months of November and December, they gather a quantity of cresses, celery, and amaranth. They also eat a kind of sweet flower similar to the wild rose although smaller, of which the bears are very fond; it grows in swampy humid places in canyons. The cubs of this kind of bear, which the Indians hunt, stealing them from their mothers, are raised and fattened for eating when they are ready, as is done with pigs.

....Among the sea fish there are many sea bream, crabs, whitefish, curbina [white seabass], sardines of three kinds, *cochinillo*, [possibly croaker], and tunny; in the streams and rivers are trout, spinebacks, *machuros* [an Indian name], and turtles. [They use] fishing canoes [tule balsas; cf. Wagner 1929:15-16]....The tridents they use are of bone; the barb is well shaped and well adapted to its use. The fishhooks are made of pieces of shell fashioned with great skill and art.

For catching sardines, they use large baskets, into which they throw the bait which these fish like, which is the ground-up leaves of cactus, so that they come in great numbers; the Indians then make their cast and catch great numbers of the sardines.

[The following paragraph is apparently a commentary on the manufacturing skills of all the Chumash groups Fages had encountered.] In their manufactures, these Indians, men and women alike, are more finished and more artistic than those of the mission of San Gabriel. They know how to make very beautiful inlaid work of mother-of-pearl on the rims and sides of stone mortars, and various other utensils. The women weave nearly all their baskets, pitchers, trays and jars for various uses, interweaving with the reeds or willows, or embroidering upon them, long, flexible, fibrous roots, which keep their natural color, white, black, or red. They also do the same with shells, and small stones of the same three colors for decorating their cloaks and embroidering the bands of their headgear. The tools of these skillful artisans are only two, the most simple ones in the world, the knife and the punch. This latter, used by the women, is a piece of bone as sharp as an awl, from the foreleg, next to the shin bone, of the deer. The other is more particularly a tool of the men. They usually carry it across the head, fastened to the hair. It is a flint cut tongue-shaped, with very sharp edges; they affix it to a very small handle of straight polished wood inlaid with mother-of-pearl. These knives are made, as is perhaps natural, by rubbing and rubbing away the stone (or natural glass) in contact with harder ones, with water and fine sand. With these knives they supply their lack of iron and steel by dint of much labor and industry.

....These natives always carry the means of making fire in the shape of two small sticks attached to the net with which they are accustomed to gird themselves; one stick is like a spindle, and the other is oblong, or it might properly be called a parallelo-piped; in it there is a hole in the middle, in which the end of the other stick may be rotated. When they want to make fire, they secure the square stick firmly on the ground between the feet, and the round one, stuck into the hole, they rotate rapidly between the hands. It begins to smoke instantly, and both sticks are burned a little.

Concluding the chapter, I will say that at a distance of two leagues from this mission there are as many as eight springs of bitumen or thick black resin which they call *chapapote*; it is used chiefly by these natives for caulking their small water craft [cf. Hudson and Blackburn 1982:331, 335, 336] and to pitch the vases and pitchers which the women make for holding water....(Fages 1972:47-52).

In August, 1772, Fray Junipero Serra accompanied Fages and an escort of soldiers from Monterey to San Diego. En route, Serra founded Mission San Luis Obispo, offering the first mass on September 1 (Engelhardt 1933:14-16). Although the Obispeño around the mission helped to construct the buildings and were described as "very affable and kindly" (Palou, quoted in Engelhardt 1933:19), they showed little interest in becoming converts:

> By the end of October, 1773, thirteen months after the first holy Mass had been offered up by Fr. Serra, only twelve children had been baptized, although a few adults had also placed themselves under instruction. The reason for the indifference of the Indians, according to Fr. Palou, could be traced to the fact that they could gather an abundance of wild seeds and berries, that the chase yielded sufficient venison, and that the seashore gave plenty of fish. On this account, he thought, it would not be easy to induce these roving Indians to live at the Mission. Furthermore, inasmuch as their habitations consisted only of tules and mats, when the seeds and wild fruits ceased to be plentiful in one place, they simply moved to another locality, where it required little time to construct their huts anew. Thus it would be possible to reduce the natives to a sedentary manner of life only through their fondness for gifts, and especially of clothing, which was very desirable, as it would grow very cold in winter....(Engelhardt 1933:22).

In 1776, San Luis Obispo had just under two hundred neophytes (Engelhardt 1933:157). The regimen of mission life had been established; Fray Pedro Font, stopping in March of that year, noted that the unmarried girls were guarded and instructed by a soldier's wife, who taught them "to sew and be tidy; and they do already appear such as though they were little Spaniards" (Bolton 1930, IV:270).

Some of the old ways persisted, however, even as more of the Obispeño were brought into the mission. In 1814, Fray Luis Martinez, Franciscan missionary at San Luis Obispo, responded to the *interrogatorio* issued by the Spanish Department of Overseas Colonies (Geiger and Meighan 1976). The *interrogatorio* contained thirty-six questions on native populations, including their lifeways before conversion. Several of Fray Martinez' answers described aspects of Obispeño culture:

> Question 3) The languages spoken at this mission are fifteen different kinds according to the region in which the villages are located whence the converts originated, for every village possesses a distinct idiom. However, when gathered together at this new mission, the natives use only one language although their parents preserve their native idioms in which they have been raised. However, all understand one another in their respective languages (Geiger and Meighan 1976:19-20).
>
> Question 10) Some of the new Christians who are but beginning to hear the name of God are still found possessed of superstitions especially those who became Christians at an advanced age....They perform their adorations on a small bit of land which is neat and clean and out in the country. There come together all the medicine men offering seeds, plumes and beads and for this service the Indians pay them in accordance with the need they have of rain or seeds (Geiger and Meighan 1976:49).

Question 15) The Indians have no physicians but they have healers who administer their remedies to the sick....It is certain that among the Indians each one keeps secret his operation because from it he obtains his livelihood. The remedies which they employ are plants, bark, roots and the leaves of various kinds of trees which I do not know except the ivy from which I have seen them make plasters, for instance in the case of a man who had been frightfully lacerated by a bear in the arms, legs, sides and shoulders. He was cured by simply being covered with the powder of the ivy. They also have recourse to bloodletting but not after our fashion. With a flint they scarify any part that aches. Then by forcibly sucking with the mouth the scarified spot they extract a considerable portion of blood....(Geiger and Meighan 1976:75).

Question 21) In every village or rancheria the Indians have cemeteries marked with tablets or stones. They also have their songs and ceremonies for the burial of their dead. They distribute beads to all who come to assist in bearing the dead to the grave and there is one who carries the corpse on his shoulders who in virtue of his office has the obligation to open the grave (Geiger and Meighan 1976:98).

Question 25) The Indians readily lend not money but their wild seeds which are to be returned in the same kind. For this it is not necessary to be a relative or acquaintance. To everyone who enters the cabin of an Indian food is offered without obligation. Such is the mutual understanding which I have observed practiced among them (Geiger and Meighan 1976:107).

Question 26) Notwithstanding that the Indians in their pagan state hold land by families they have no need for agreements to plant for they live on the products bestowed by nature; yet it is a weighty matter that produces not a few wars if anyone has the effrontery to go and gather fruits without previously paying and notifying the legitimate owner....(Geiger and Meighan 1976:110).

Question 30) Among the Indians are all kinds of classes, poor and rich. Among the rich however, there is one in each village whom all recognize and whose voice is respected by all who live with him. To him, I do not know by what standards, all pay tribute of fruits, goods and beads....(Geiger and Meighan 1976:122).

Question 33) ...they have among themselves a variety of songs and I have seen among them some wind instruments made of sticks of elder trees....(Geiger and Meighan 1976:134).

Question 35) ....The pagans entertained a notion about eternity in which they change their nature. For those who died here on this soil they are wont to say were transformed into bears and they went to live in some woods two leagues from this mission. I myself have known a Christian of this mission who at twelve o'clock in the day time was chased by a bear. It was believed that it was one of that class of bears because of the little fear the horse manifested and because the bear kept running after him. Likewise in other rancherias they have the same ideas (Geiger and Meighan 1976:144).

> Question 36) The dress which the Indians wear in their pagan state would have some similarity to that of our father, Adam....But these Indians profess so little decency that they live without even a leaf covering just as they were born and they conceal the blush of shame on their face (if it can be called that) with red paint and ordinary drawings they produce. The women in some parts go about in the same style but for many in this region their dress consists of tanned deer skin which the women wear hanging from a girdle and that is all they wear....(Geiger and Meighan 1976:149).

In 1814, when Fray Martinez prepared his responses, the convert population at Mission San Luis Obispo was steadily declining. Due in part to fugitivism but mainly to introduced diseases, the number of neophytes sank from its height of 961 in 1805 to 231 in 1832. The California missions were secularized in 1834, and French traveler Duflot de Mofras, stopping at Mission San Luis Obispo in 1841, noted "at most barely one hundred" converts (Engelhardt 1933:141, 157).

Intensified recruitment for the mission from a small, scattered population, a high death rate, and over sixty years of contact with a dominating culture made inevitable the disintegration of Obispeño village life and its wider social context. Something of this people's practices and beliefs remained, to be remembered into the twentieth century (below). By 1840, however, the Obispeño were a small fraction of the Native American population in what had been their country.

The largest native group, with whom the remaining Obispeño had mingled, were the Tulareño, or Yokuts peoples. Prior to European contact, the Yokuts had included the Obispeño in their established trade routes through Chumash territory (cf. Latta 1977:314, 320, 321). Klar (1980:117) has noted a prehistoric Yokuts influence on the numeral system of the Obispeño. Contact between the Obispeño and the Yokuts, however, greatly increased under the mission system. In 1877 Powers (1976:382) wrote:

> Many years ago the Indians dwelling on the lake at the mouth of King's River were carried away captives by the Spaniards, and taken to San Luis Obispo. After a long residence there, upon the breaking up of the missions, they returned to their native land; but meantime a new generation had grown up, to whom the old mission was their home. They yearned to return, and to this day they make an annual pilgrimage to San Luis, where they remain a month; and they would by preference live there all their remaining days, only their children, born on the shores of Tulare Lake, will not consent.

Neophytes were also recruited from Yokuts groups for Mission La Purisima Concepcion, when the death rate of the local population soared (John Johnson, personal communication). After secularization, many of these converts settled in Obispeño country.

Coastal natives who had become disaffected with mission life often fled to the San Joaquin valley, the Yokuts homeland. The refugees knew about domestic livestock, and as Wallace (1978:460) notes, they returned with the Yokuts for stock raids at coastal missions and ranchos (cf. Janssens 1953:145-150; Southern Yokuts, this volume).

In marked contrast, Rafael Villa's Rancho San Geronimo, just north of Cayucos, was established in 1838 with a Migueleño work force, for whom the ranch constituted a refuge. The Migueleños

carried out the chores of the ranch, but established their own village and maintained some of their old lifeways. The community remained into the 1870s (see Southern (Migueleño) Salinan, this volume).

The shared world of the Obispeño, the Yokuts, and the Migueleno was recalled by Rosario Cooper, the last speaker of Obispeño. She was born March 26, 1841, into a family which had been missionized early. Her maternal great-grandfather was baptized by Fray Font on the 1776 expedition (above). Rosario was 72 years old when she was first interviewed by John P. Harrington, in 1913, and living in Lopez Canyon, above Arroyo Grande. She was close here to one homeland of her family. Her maternal grandmother and great-grandmother came from the village of *zepjato* at Avila Beach, but her grandfather and great-grandfather were born at *slegin*, in Arroyo Grande (Johnson 1985; Harrington 1986:Rl.1, Fr. 0031).

Aside from her family, Rosario had known only a few Obispeño. Among them were Lucia, a middle-aged woman in charge of the female neophytes at Mission San Luis Obispo when Rosario was growing up. Lucia "taught the girls to pray," but also "used to hold something...in her hand when seated where Tulareño came around, to protect herself" against their poison, or witchcraft (Harrington 1986:Rl. 1, Frs. 0055, 0056, 0217, 0541, Rl. 5, 0646). Rosario remembered being told by Lucia that "before they were baptized the Indians believed in sun, moon, and stars" (Harrington 1986:Rl. 1, 0055; cf. Fages' report, above).

Rosario also remembered Meleton and Francisco, two old men who lived on the hill behind the mission. Meleton had been the mission shoemaker; he sewed shoes for Rosario when she was "a big girl still barefooted" (Harrington 1986:Rl. 5, Fr. 0004). Rosario commented matter-of-factly that Francisco Niksutenene "used to go to the shore and bring fish and abalone. He was a bear medicineman ....Francisco who used to turn into a bear used to go with Alforo to Los Pechos ranch. He brought fish and sold them..." (Harrington 1986:Rl.1, Fr. 0200, Rl. 3, Fr. 0099; cf. Fray Martinez' response, Question 35, above). Meleton, Francisco, and Lucia died in the same outbreak of smallpox (Harrington 1986:Rl. 5, Frs. 0157, 0158).

By some time in the 1840s, Yokuts groups were traveling regularly to the San Luis Obispo area. Rosario recalled their encampments here when she was a child. These were not brief visits; the only *temescal*, or sweathouse, at San Luis Obispo was that of the Yokuts, "a little above town." On some trips, both men and women came, with goods for sale, including baskets and tule packets of *panoche de carrizo* (reed grass sugar; cf. King 1990:23). Both Rosario and Pedro Quintana, an elderly San Luis Obispo resident, remembered Tachi men coming for the fall harvest of tunas, or prickly pears (Harrington 1986:Rl. 1, Frs. 0055, 0082, 0208, Rl. 2, Frs. 0456, 0460, Rl. 5, Fr. 0537).

It is not surprising, given the tenacity of old lifeways among the nonmissionized Yokuts, that Rosario remembered their traditional material culture far better than she could recall that of the Obispeño. She knew carrying nets and carrying baskets, for example, only as manufactured and used by Yokuts women. She knew the Obispeño word for the walnut dice game, but it was Yokuts women whom she recalled playing it (Harrington 1986:Rl. 1, Fr. 0165, Rl. 2, Fr. 0691, Rl. 3, 0293, Rl. 5, Frs. 0193,
0766).

Although she was a devout Catholic, Rosario believed, as had Lucia, in the power of witchcraft. She described to Harrington the deaths of both her half-sister, Cecilia, and her half-brother,

Marcelino, from Yokuts "poisoners" (Harrington 1986:Rl. 2, Fr. 0638, Rl. 5, Fr. 0257), and described her mother's bewitchment:

> Her mother took vestments, etc. of church out to a place to wash them, and Tulareños camping at the Pilos and Molinos [grain mill] some distance away. [Rosario's] mother felt something hit her in the neck (on side of neck) and her neck became stiff. She returned to SLO mission and summoned Leopoldo. Leopoldo was a Tulareño baptized at La Purisima and had lived long there at SLO. She summoned him to cure her, while another woman (a white woman) was given the washing. The medicineman told her he must come later—must prepare. Some prepared for their *hechicerias* [witchcraft] by three days of fasting and singing, but this medicineman only took about one-half day on this occasion. He placed feathers of *pajaros pintos*, butt to butt, in two rows in a *batea* [tray] of wood and put down, from under the wings of the same kind of bird, all around the *batea* in ring shape. In the center was water medicined in some way. He gave her mother some of this water to drink and then took flint and cut her mother's scalp back of the temple and began to suck. He kept sucking and spitting blood in something he asked to spit in. At last he sucked out a flint. That removed the cause, he said. Her mother paid him liberally, also gave him blankets (Harrington 1986:Rl. 2, Fr. 0477; cf. Fray Martinez' response, Question 15, above).

Many of Rosario's happiest memories, however, involved the Yokuts she knew, especially singers and dancers. Rosario sang—Chumash, Yokuts, and Spanish songs. Harrington preserved some of her music on wax cylinders, and it is obvious that she enjoyed recalling for him both the musicians she had known and their performances (Harrington 1986:Rl. 5, Fr. 0864; references throughout Reels 1, 2, 5).

Maria Pulqueria and her brother, Gregorio Sapaka (believed to be "Sapagai" or "Shapakay," a well-known Yokut shaman), were born in *wowal*, a Yokuts rancheria. Rosario did not know Sapaka, but recalled that he had herded cattle at the mission, that he was a good singer, and that she "saw him and many others dancing at the ranch of Roberto Villa," (the son of Rafael Villa and heir to the Rancho San Geronimo, above). Pulqueria had been baptized at Mission San Miguel and spoke Migueleño as well as Tulareño. She "lived many years at San Luis Obispo but talked no Obispeño." Rosario recalls Pulqueria in two worlds, as a washerwoman and as a dancer, with "strings of beads three inches long which she wore as earrings" and a slender bone nose ornament. She was the wife of Juan *el culebra* (the snake), "the rattlesnake dancer at Roberto Villa's ranch" (Harrington 1986:Rl. 1, Frs. 0153, 0240, 0510, Rl. 2, Frs. 0656, 0674, 0675, 0757; John Johnson, personal communication, 1992).

Rosario recalled only one Obispeño dancer, Honorio; he wore the only feathered skirt she had seen. Maria Tomasa Ajala, a particularly gifted Ineseño singer and dancer, wore a feathered headdress for one dance and held *plumeros*, or bunches of feathers, for another. Rosario also recalled Antoniño and Toyoyo, Purismeño singers and dancers. Hilario and Faustino, both Migueleño, "danced the skunk at San Luis Obispo." Rosario, who sang the skunk song, remarked that, "The Migueleño were never good at singing or anything else. They sang Tulareño songs." She did not seem troubled that six of the twenty-one songs she recorded are designated "Tulareño" (Harrington 1986:Rl. 1, Frs. 0153, 0160, 0170, Rl. 2, Frs. 0570, 0725, 0726, 0737, 0738, 0745, Rl. 5, Frs. 0309, 0316, 0399, 0864; John Johnson, personal communication, 1992).

Rosario was critical of Migueleño dancers as well as singers, commenting that, "The Tulareño just jumped when they danced. The Purismeño put a foot on the ground in time with the song. Migueleño had more Tulareño dances than anything else" (Harrington 1986:Rl. 1, Fr. 0468). She retained vivid memories, however, of the dancing at the Migueleño settlement on Villa's ranch, recalling that "The Tulareño would go first to San Miguel and hold a fiesta there and then the Tulareño and Migueleño would go together to the rancho of Roberto Villa" (Harrington 1986:Rl. 1, Fr. 0211).

At Villa's ranch, Rosario saw Sapaka dance, and Juan *el culebra* dancing with "two rattlesnakes in his headdress." A Migueleño named Roque "used to put white clay on his head and put hair on each side to dance the coyote" (Harrington 1986:Rl. 1, Fr. 0544, Rl. 2, Frs. 0704, 0757, 0758; cf. Latta 1977:647-649). She remembered that the crowd "heard the Tachis coming down the canyon. Captains ahead, then men and many women behind. They came slapping hands over mouths as they came. They danced some, then soon ate and then danced..." (Harrington 1986:Rl. 2, Frs. 0717, 0756).

Rosario Cooper died in 1917. In her language, her music, and her memories of old lifeways, she was a last link to a pre-Mission world on the Obispeño coast. Further, she recalled life as a neophyte in the secularized Mission San Luis Obispo. And she provided a rare look at the mingled cultures of the Obispeño, the Yokuts, and the Migueleño in the homeland of the Obispeño.

Figure 6. Ranchos of the South Central Coast.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND FOR THE BRANCH CANAL

Introduction

The sections of the Branch Canal for which this history was written extend from the area of Devil's Den in Kern County to the northern portion of Vandenberg Air Force Base in Santa Barbara County (Fig. 1). Most of the line passes through San Luis Obispo County, which has a rich and varied past. The present study, originally submitted as separate reports for six sections of the canal, focuses on the areas along the line, and cannot be considered a full history of San Luis Obispo County. Cambria and San Simeon, for example, lie in the county's northwest corner and are mentioned only briefly. Along with general information on growth and change in the county, however, the background provides sidelights from local history, some of which are little known. These specific accounts of persons and places may be of particular interest to the many residents who continue to appreciate, study, and document their county's past.

Following the example of pioneer editor and historian Myron Angel, who organized his invaluable *History of San Luis Obispo County* geographically, the historical background for Branch Canal's line through the county has been divided into two parts: the land to the north and the land to the south of Cuesta Pass. A third section provides historical background along the line of the canal in northern Santa Barbara County.

HISTORIC OVERVIEW: NORTH OF CUESTA PASS

"Another Land and Another Clime"

> In passing the Santa Lucia the entire aspect of the country changed. It was as if we had passed into another land and another clime (Brewer 1974:92).

Recorded history in San Luis Obispo County began with the 1769 expedition of Gaspar de Portola, traveling north from the San Diego outpost of New Spain, to search for Monterey Bay. Portola's group followed the coast from the vicinity of present day Morro Bay to San Carpoforo Creek, where they turned inland for a difficult passage across the Santa Lucia Mountains and then continued north (Bolton 1927:185-196; Brown 1991). In July, 1771, Junipero Serra established Mission San Antonio de Padua, near one of Portola's camp sites, and in September, 1772, he founded Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa, about a mile from the expedition's route (Engelhardt 1929a:4; 1933:16).

In 1772, closer to the northeastern line of the canal, Pedro Fages and his soldiers were the first documented travelers on the route of modern Highway 101 from San Luis Obispo to Paso Robles (Bolton 1931; Fages 1972:62-63). Fages (1972:62) reported that in going from San Diego to Monterey, he found a short cut, a trail that later was "very well known and understood by the people who live in the New Settlements, and will become more and more so from day to day...". Juan Bautista de Anza noted the route as he followed it in 1774; he and Father Pedro Font described it during the colonial expedition Anza led to San Francisco in 1776 (Bolton 1930, II:108-109, III:112-113, 159-160, IV:273-276). Aside from this travelers' corridor, no historic use of the land near the northeastern line of the canal is reported until the establishment of Mission San Miguel Arcangel.

Mission San Miguel Arcangel

In 1795, Father Buenaventura Sitjar of Mission San Antonio led an expedition to look for a suitable mission site between San Antonio and San Luis Obispo (Engelhardt 1929b:3). Indicative of settlement requirements in the increasingly arid land to the east, Father Sitjar's first requisite for the new mission was water. He chose a site called *Parage de los Pozas*, or Place of the Pools (Engelhardt 1929b:3-4), and Mission San Miguel was founded there on July 25, 1797. Stock raising, which became a major economic activity in northern San Luis Obispo county, began almost immediately at San Miguel. Other missions donated 128 cattle, 350 sheep, 42 oxen, and 7 mules (Engelhardt 1929b:8). The sheep, raised for their wool, were of particular importance. The fathers at San Miguel noted in their report of December 31, 1804:

> The principal industrial branches are the spinning of wool and weaving it into cloth, blankets, skirts and other kinds of simple apparel. The Mission raises oxen, cows, horses, sheep, mules and pigs (Engelhardt 1929b:9-10).

The fathers at San Miguel soon began the extension of mission lands to ranchos for grazing and the cultivation of grain. A major outlier was the Rancho de la Asuncion, which surrounded present day Atascadero. An adobe house was built on this rancho in 1812, and a granary in 1813 (Engelhardt 1929b:13). Like Ranchos Paso de Robles and Santa Ysabel, which also belonged to San Miguel, Asuncion lay along the route north from Mission San Luis Obispo. Asuncion formed the boundary between San Miguel's land and San Luis Obispo's northernmost rancho at Santa Margarita. The less traveled land to the east and southeast of San Miguel was used mainly for grazing, and the mission's holdings there - Ranchos Cholame, Estrella, and Huer Huero - were apparently established later than those to the west (Engelhardt 1929b:27, 28, 35; Cook 1960:243, 254, 267; 1962:184).

Near the close of his 1795 report on the site of Mission San Miguel, Father Sitjar remarked that "...a Christian there told me that there are many Indians in that region" (Engelhardt 1929b:5). During 1797 and early 1798, neophytes from other missions (including 10 converts from San Luis Obispo and 47 from San Antonio) aided in the establishment of San Miguel. Thereafter the population of the mission grew rapidly from converts among the native people of the more immediate area (Engelhardt 1929;b:9; Gibson 1983:168). The largest number of converts (314) came from *cholaam* (Gibson 1983:119, 168, 238).

Father Juan Martin, who had attempted to recruit villagers from *cholaam* for San Miguel (see Ethnography, Southern Salinan), went further afield for converts in November, 1804, when he traveled to the Yokuts villages on Tulare Lake (Cook 1960:243-244). As at *cholaam*, the father met a defiant chief:

> ...my request affected him very badly....I relaxed my determination not to return home...without taking with me as many small children as they would give me. Finally I went home quite disappointed at having lost, because of one villain, such a harvest for Heaven (Cook 1960:244).

Proselytizing, such as Father Martin's, and forced recruitment among the Yokuts (cf. McCarthy 1993:8-9) could not maintain the native population of Mission San Miguel. The fathers' report

in 1804 recommended the establishment of a mission in Yokuts country, noting that "there the neophytes from the Tulares would be prevented from running away. It is the painful experience of the missionaries that such Christians, very much attached to their Tulare homes, leave the mission..." (quoted in Engelhardt 1929b:10). Fugitivism, however, only contributed to the increasing loss of neophytes, who, as observed (see Ethnography, Southern Salinan), died from forced work, changed diet, overcrowding, and, above all, the introduction of European diseases. The population of San Miguel, at its height of 1,076 in 1814, had sunk by 1832 to 658 (Engelhardt 1929b:60).

Trails to the Tulares

Missionizing trips to the San Joaquin Valley were soon followed by punitive expeditions, as the Yokuts and other native people who had taken refuge with them increasingly raided missions and ranchos for horses and cattle (see Ethnography, Southern Salinan and The Ranchos, below). The expeditions were sent to recover livestock and to kill or to capture the raiders (cf. Cook 1960, 1962). Military and vigilante groups continued these forays into the valley during the 1840s.

Ironically, expeditions on their way to the San Joaquin often followed the established trails of native peoples. At least two of these routes crossed the area of the canal; portions of the trails now lie under modern highways.

The best documented route became part of Highway 41. Sergeant Jose Pico, returning from an expedition to Tulare Lake in January, 1826, camped near Cottonwood Pass, then traveled to Mission San Miguel by way of Estrella (Cook 1962:184; Latta 1977:315-316).

Sergeant Sebastian Rodriguez traveled from San Miguel to Buena Vista Lake in May and June, 1828, stopping at La Panza. In all probability he followed the native trail over the Carrizo Plain to McKittrick Valley (Cook 1962:185-186; Latta 1977:314); part of his route is now Highway 58.

In July, 1852, Samuel Pollard, owner of the first store in San Luis Obispo, accepted the offer of a Yokuts leader to go gold hunting from the leader's home village in the San Joaquin (Pollard 1971:45-46). Pollard claimed that his journey was "the first wagon track ever made from this place to the Tulare Valley" (Pollard 1971:45). His group traveled to Santa Margarita, "through the Huer Huero Rancho and continued on through Cottonwood pass into the Tulare Valley" (Pollard 1971:46). Pollard may have crossed the trail that became part of Highway 58; he would almost certainly have followed portions of the old route that is now Highway 41.

Pollard's group arrived to the south of Tulare Lake, apparently having followed the native trail through Alamo Solo, or Dagany Gap (Pollard 1971:46). This trail is shown on an 1855 surveyor's map of T25S R18E (Fig.7) as "Road from Chelam to Sulphur Springs" (Bureau of Land Management Township Plat T25S R18E; see McCarthy 1993:19-20).

One of the roads and trails shown converging at Sulphur Springs (later Alamo Solo and Dagany Gap) is the route Latta (1977:316) called "the old West Side Indian Trace." The trails described all connected to this major route along the San Joaquin Valley's western foothills (Latta

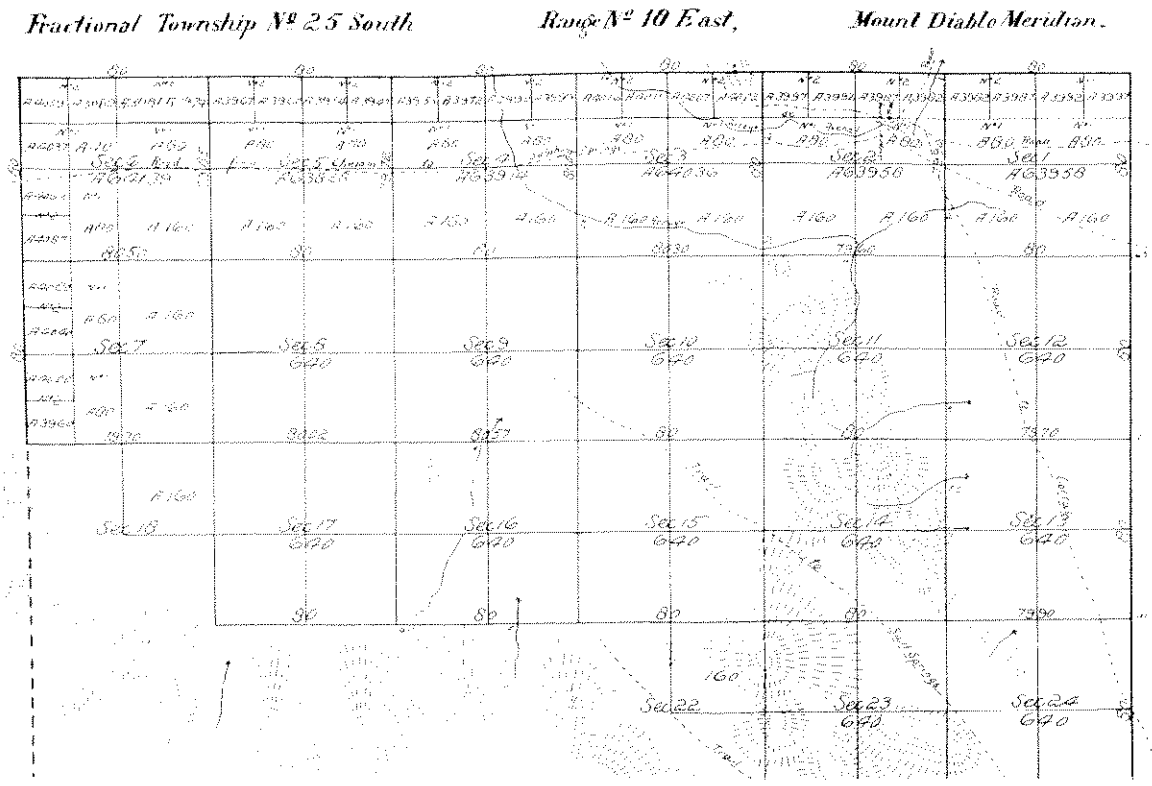


Figure 7. Road from Chelam to Sulpher Springs. Bureau of Land Management Township Plat T25S R18E.

1936:10; 1977:314-316). During mission times the trail was part of El Camino Viejo, a wagon road between the Los Angeles Basin and what is now East Oakland (Latta 1936:3-4, map). The road ran through the southern San Joaquin west of today's Highway 33 and roughly paralleled it (Latta 1936:map; 1977:316).

The roads and trails shown on the 1855 map are the only use indicated at the time for the land around Devil's Den. Until the late 1850s (below), the sole historic activity recorded in this easternmost portion of the canal area was that of traveling elsewhere.

The Ranchos

After Mexico had established its independence from Spain in the revolution of 1822, residents in Upper California urged dispersal of the vast mission lands. The secularization decree of 1834 provided for the distribution of a portion of each mission's land and goods to its native converts to help establish the Christian Indians as independent citizens. Little mission property, however, actually went to the converts. Those still living on mission ranchos often found themselves working for the new owners, Californios who had been granted the land.

In 1839, William Hartnell, reporting on the progress of secularization at the missions, visited San Miguel. The neophytes asked to keep land on the western ranchos, including Paso de Robles and Asuncion, both of which had buildings and grain fields. They were willing to give up the eastern lands: Cholame, Huer Huero, and Estrella (Engelhardt 1929b:35; Shoup 1982:150-151). By 1845, however, San Miguel's ranches had been granted to Mexican citizens, with one exception:

land on the Estrella was granted to the mission's Christian Indians in 1844. U.S. courts rejected their claim (Cowan 1977:17, 17, 35, 40, 68, 93, 95).

Huer Huero

The disposition of the mission's ranch at Huer Huero (Fig. 8), typified the Mexican land grant process, by which vast acreages of mission land could be awarded almost casually to any Mexican citizen with the proper political connections. Jose Mariano Bonilla, who applied for the Huer Huero grant, was a young lawyer and teacher who had arrived from Mexico in 1834 with the Hijar and Padres Colony (Bancroft 1886, III:262-263). In 1837, Bonilla married Dolores Garcia, daughter of Inocente Garcia, who acted as administrator of Mission San Miguel from 1837 to 1845 (Bancroft 1886, II:724; III:752-753). Bonilla served as his father-in-law's clerk in 1837, and was acting administrator of the mission in 1839 (Bancroft 1886, III:685). In the latter year, Bonilla occupied the land at Huer Huero. He built a house and corral in 1840, when "he brought in a herd of cattle from Rancho San Simeon, which belonged to his father-in-law, and also acquired about five hundred sheep and one hundred horses" (Nicholson 1980:17). Rancho Huer Huero, one square league, was granted to Bonilla by Governor Alvarado in 1842 (Bancroft 1886, IV:655).

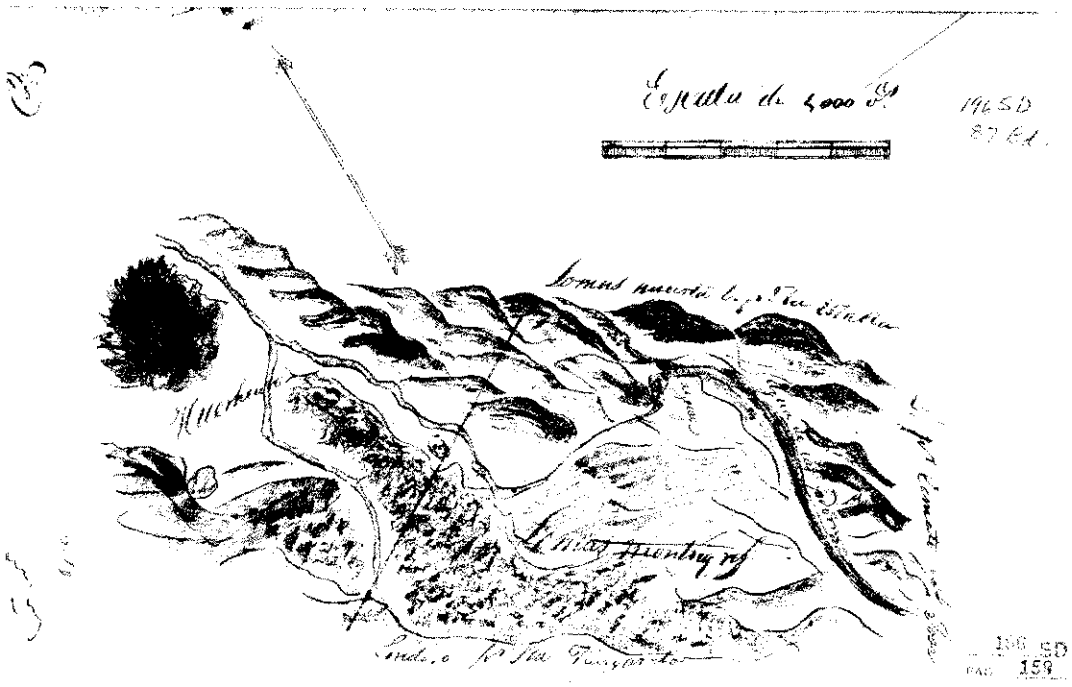


Figure 8. Diseño of the Huer Huero Ranch.

In April of 1842, however, Alvarado appointed Bonilla "administrator and *juez de paz*" at Mission San Luis Obispo; he was at work there by April 20 (Angel 1883:284; Bancroft 1886, IV:657-658). Rancho Huer Huero was managed by a mayordomo. In 1844 Indians from the Yokuts territory attacked the ranch; during the raid, the Indians "burned the house, destroyed the corrals and killed three vaqueros" (Nicholson 1980:17).

Bonilla rebuilt in 1845 and stocked more cattle. He applied to Governor Pio Pico for two additional leagues of land, which were granted in March, 1846 (Bonilla and Bonilla 1976:126; Nicholson 1980:17).

> Again, the Indians attacked, taking the cattle. This time they killed his brother, Patricio. Bonilla was deeply discouraged, and some time after November 1847, he turned over the entire rancho to Francis Branch in exchange for 253 head of cattle (Nicholson 1980:17).

Francis Branch, like Bonilla, was an archetypal land grantee in Mexican California; Branch exemplified the successful American adventurer/entrepreneur (See South of Cuesta Pass). How much use Branch made of the Huer Huero is not known. In 1856, he sold it to David Mallagh, who hoped to raise cattle on the ranch, but apparently abandoned the venture. When the Huer Huero grant was finally confirmed to Francis Branch in 1866, the land had belonged to Flint, Bixby & Co. for seven years (Nicholson 1980:16-17).

Figure 9. Diseño of the Rancho Cholame.

Cholame

To the east, Rancho Cholame (Fig. 9) was granted to Mauricio Gonzalez by Governor Micheltorena on February 7, 1844 (Bowman 1958:n.p.). Mauricio's father, Rafael, whom Bancroft described as "an ignorant man of good character," was sent from Mexico to be the customs officer at Monterey in 1833 (Bancroft 1886, III:136, 761). Mauricio came to California in 1840 and served as a guard at the customs house (Bancroft 1886, III:136, 760). Mauricio Gonzalez owned Rancho Cholame for seven years, but his stay on the land was even more brief. Cholame and Gonzalez, however, typified the Californio rancho and ranchero. The grant was vast: six leagues, or over fifteen and a half square miles (Bowman 1958:n.p.). Gonzalez, like most rancheros, raised cattle and horses (Gonzalez 1877:27-28, 33-34). Indians raided his livestock, as they raided the Huer Huero and other inland ranchos. In 1846 Gonzalez reported from his father's rancho, San Miguelito, northwest of Mission San Miguel, that "all my gentle horses (100 more or less)"

had been driven west to the Santa Lucias. One culprit was recognized as a native from the Mission San Antonio area (Gonzalez 1877:27-28; Cowan 1977:86). At Cholame, stock was raided heavily by Indians from the Tulares (Shoup 1982:152). In spite of these difficulties, Gonzalez apparently provided his guests with legendary Californio hospitality. More than 30 of Fremont's troops camped at San Miguelito for two weeks in 1846; "while they were there I supplied them with food and other necessities" (Gonzalez 1877:24).

Rancho Cholame, like many Mexican land grants, passed into American ownership after California's admission into the union in 1850. Mauricio Gonzalez sold the ranch to his father, Rafael, on September 12, 1851; three weeks later, Rafael sold it to Ellen White (Jack House Collection: Partial Chain of Title). It is probable that Ellen White's ownership of Cholame was mainly or completely absentee. She, her husband Charles, and their two children were overland immigrants in 1846, originally settling in present-day San Jose. Both Charles and Ellen possessed what nineteenth century historians lauded as "Yankee enterprise." In the year of their arrival, Charles was appointed a member of the council to establish and govern the Pueblo of San Jose, in which he also applied for a tract of land (Munro-Fraser 1881:331; Bancroft 1886, V:772). He filed as claimant for land grants including Rancho de Pala, east of San Jose, and Arroyo de San Antonio, in Sonoma County (Bancroft 1886, III:711, V:772; Wyatt and Arbuckle 1948:30). By the time of his accidental death in 1853, he had "dealt largely in landed interests, which by enhancement in value, secured a large fortune for his family" (Hall 1871:366).

It is evident that Ellen White acquired land independently, since both the sale of Cholame in 1851 and the claim filed for it in 1852 are in her name. Other grants for which she was a claimant include Rancho San Justo el Viejo y San Bernabe, in modern San Benito County; San Justo had been granted to Rafael Gonzalez in 1836 (Bancroft 1886, III:678).

Litigation to establish ownership of Cholame in accordance to United States legal codes was briefer than that for many land grant cases. Ellen White's claim was rejected in 1854, confirmed in 1858, again challenged, and finally established by a decision of the U.S. Supreme Court in 1860. A patent was issued to her April 1, 1865, for 26,621.62 acres (Bowman 1958:n.p.). By this time she did not own a single acre of the ranch. It seems astonishing, in the light of modern property laws, that the land had been sold while Ellen White's claim moved through the courts. The sale and division of contested lands, however, were common practice in California land grant cases.

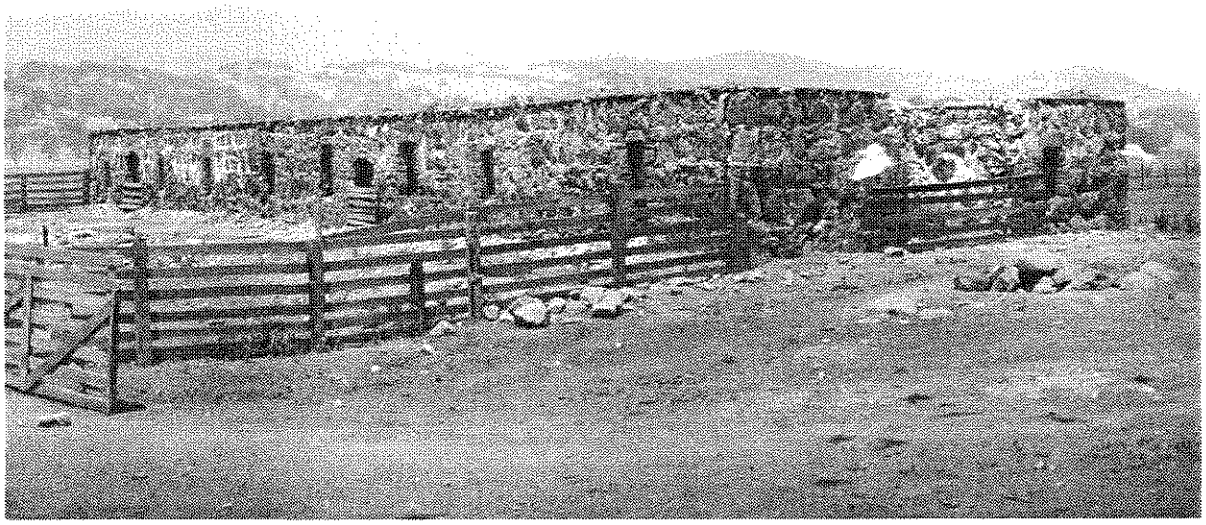
After the rejection of her claim in 1854, Mrs. White seems to have lost interest temporarily in Cholame. This note followed a list of 1855 county assessments:

> Mrs. Ellen E. White's Rancho de Cholame of 27,000 acres was likewise delinquent in $154.65, and this property being offered for sale by the Sheriff, found no bidders (Angel 1883:172).

In 1856, however, she sold one undivided quarter; in 1857, another; and finally, in 1859, the remaining one-half (Jack House Collection: Partial Chain of Title). The boundaries of Cholame were surveyed in 1861 (Bureau of Land Management Survey Notes, T25S R15E), and the entire ranch was sold in 1867 to Colonel W.W. Hollister.

Santa Margarita

Of the three great land-grant ranchos crossed by the canal's northeastern line, the grandest and best known was the Santa Margarita. Unlike the Huer Huero and Cholame, which had been utilized by Mission San Miguel, Santa Margarita was an *asistencia* and outlying ranch for Mission San Luis Obispo. Native converts on the ranch tended vast herds of cattle and flocks of sheep, and cultivated crops, particularly wheat.



Asistencia of the Mission San Luis Obispo on the Santa Margarita Rancho circa 1906. Courtesy of the Atascadero Historical Society.

Santa Margarita was the first of these three land grants, and remained longest in the ownership of the grantee. Joaquin Estrada was already using the land when he petitioned for ownership; Acting Governor Manuel Jimeno granted Santa Margarita (17,735 acres) to him in September, 1841 (Spanish Archives, Expediente 253). Estrada, born in Monterey in 1815, was noted as single and living with his younger brother, Francisco, on Chualar Rancho in 1836 (Bancroft 1886, II:792-793, III:677; Nicholson 1980:142). By the time he petitioned for the ranch in 1841, Estrada had a family; they moved to the Santa Margarita in 1843 (Nicholson 1980:67).

Estrada took an active part in local government; he is listed as a *Juez de Paz* and an alcalde of San Luis Obispo in 1845, and was elected a magistrate in 1849 (Angel 1883:129-130). After the organization of San Luis Obispo as a California county in 1850, Estrada's elected positions included those of County Recorder, 1850, and member of the Board of Supervisors, 1852 (Angel 1883:131, 134-135).

Santa Margarita Rancho prospered. J. Ross Browne, traveling from Mission San Miguel to San Luis Obispo in the summer of 1849, wrote:

> ...I struck into the Valley of Santa Margarita. I shall never forget my first impression of this valley. Encircled by ranges of blue mountains were broad, rich pastures, covered with innumerable herds of cattle; beautifully diversified with groves, streams, and shrubbery; castellated cliffs in the foreground as the trail wound downward; a group of cattle grazing by the margins of a little lake, their forms mirrored in the water; a mirage in the distance; mountain upon mountain beyond, as far as the eye could reach, till their dim outlines were lost in the golden glow of the atmosphere. Surely a more lovely spot never existed upon earth. I have wandered over many a bright and beautiful land, but never, even in the glorious East, in Italy, Spain, Switzerland, or South America, have I seen a country so richly favored by nature as California, and never a more lovely valley than Santa Margarita upon the whole wide world. There is nothing comparable to the mingled wildness and repose of such a scene; the rich and glowing sky, the illimitable distances, the teeming luxuriance of vegetation, its utter isolation from the busy world, and the dreamy fascination that lurks in every feature (Browne 1864:229, 231).

In 1859, "It was resolved that the ranchos of the county be divided into four classes, according to the quality of the soil and accessibility of their location, and that they be assessed accordingly." Santa Margarita led the list of first-class ranchos; both the Huer Huero and Cholame were rated as third-class (Angel 1883:173). Joaquin Estrada's assessment in 1860 for the "Santa Margarita and Atascadero Ranchos, etc" was $48,995. Only John Wilson and Francis Branch, with their massive holdings in the southwestern portion of the county exceeded Estrada in the value of their property (Angel 1883:173).

Although the Atascadero and the Asuncion were listed in other ownership in the 1850s (cf. Nicholson 1980:68), it is evident that Estrada used both ranchos. William Brewer, traveling with the United States Geological Survey, wrote in May, 186l:

> The Mission [*asistencia*] of Santa Margarita was in ruins. It is the seat of a fine ranch which was sold a few days ago for $45,000. The owner, Don Joaquin de Estrada, lives now at Atascadero Ranch, where we camped. This last ranch is all he now has left of his estates. Five years ago he had sixteen leagues of land (each league over 4,400 acres, or over 70,000 acres of land), 12,000 head of cattle, 4,000 horses, etc. Dissipation is scattering it at the rate of thousands of dollars for a single spree. Thus the ranches are fast passing out of the hands of the native population (Brewer 1974:93).

Estrada's hospitality and extravagance were legendary. Santa Margarita's "*rodeos* were festivals that were celebrated by stock-owners, *vaqueros*, and people of leisure from all parts of the county, during the continuation of which a great camp was formed, with every day a picnic and every night a round of revelry" (quoted in Angel 1883:366). Rose Ann Estrada, wife of Joaquin's son Federico, recalled a family story describing Joaquin's enchantment when he saw

his first circus; "...he had the circus come to Santa Margarita Rancho, paying all of the expenses for six weeks" (Wadhams 1969:24).

The sale of the rancho, however, was most probably forced not only by Estrada's spending, but by the decline of the cattle market in the late 1850s (see American Settlement, below). Martin Murphy, Jr., who acquired the Santa Margarita in April, 1861, raised cattle on his ranch in the Santa Clara Valley, but "made a specialty of wheat farming, from which latter grain in one year he made $60,000" (Guinn 1904:428). Murphy's total land holdings in the 1860s encompassed 100,000 acres; "his profits from wheat were so large as to give him money for making large landed purchases" (Guinn 1904:428). The San Luis Obispo County assessment records for 1860 show Murphy as possessing $31,000 in mortgages (Angel 1883:173).

In 1864 Murphy acquired Ranchos Asuncion and Atascadero (Nicholson 1980:68). He did not live on the property, but by 1865 his son, Patrick, was running the combined ranches from the Santa Margarita (Angel 1883:32a; *California Blue Book* 1907:556; Nicholson 1980:69).

Estrada moved his family across Cuesta Pass to what became known as Estrada Gardens; he was listed there in the 1870 census as a farmer, with $4,000 worth of personal possessions and no value given for land (U.S. Census, 1870, San Luis Obispo County and Township, No. 257; Nicholson 1980:74).

American Settlement: 1850-1870

The 1850 census in San Luis Obispo County, which encompassed over 3200 square miles, recorded only 336 persons (Angel 1883:129). Within the area of the canal, for instance, the 1858 survey of T26S R14E noted only an adobe on the Estrella Rancho, 10 or 12 fields, and four Indian dwellings, in addition to a portion of the trail from San Miguel on what was later preempted as the Sheid or Shedd place (below) (Bureau of Land Management Township Plat and Survey Notes, T26S R14E; Harris 1874). Cattle ranching continued to be the dominant land use throughout the county during the 1850s, with Americans codifying practices from the Californio ranchos.

The County Court of Sessions fully expressed the importance of cattle ranching with a resolution in its meeting of August 20, 1850, "That all rancheros shall give two rodeos in the year, the first to commence in April, and the second in July" (Angel 1883:132). In the same meeting:

> Gabriel Salazar was appointed *Juez de Campo*, or Judge of the Plains, an office usual under Spanish rule, but new to the American system. The Judge of the Plains had supervision of the driving, killing, branding, ownership, and other questions relating to cattle (Angel 1883:131).

By August, 1852, in response to the state's cattle boom, six men were appointed *Juez de Campo*, including two for ranches east of the Santa Lucias (Angel 1883:133).

The value of California cattle, sold under Spanish and Mexican rule mainly for hides and tallow, soared during Gold Rush immigration:

> When the Americans from the East rushed into the country on the discovery of gold, cattle suddenly became valuable for their meat; before then only their hides were sold; and I have myself, in 1847, in Monterey, seen a fat steer sold for three dollars to the ship's butcher, who later sold the hide for a dollar, thus receiving the whole carcass for only two dollars. The Yankee demand for beef made the cattle owners suddenly rich...(Nordhoff 1873:153).

During the Gold Rush, beef cattle brought up to $75 each in the San Francisco market (Cleland 1975:106).

California ranchers sold at artificially high prices for over six years. By the close of 1855, however, market rates fell. Tens of thousands of cattle had been herded into the state from the Midwest and Texas (Cleland 1975:106, 108). Huge flocks of sheep, as animals "worth seventy-five cents to one dollar a head rose to twelve or fifteen dollars in 1849," were trailed to the gold fields from the Midwest and New Mexico (Wentworth 1948:135).

In 1853, with "the westward tide of sheep movement in full flow," two large flocks were trailed to California, one belonging to Colonel William Welles Hollister and the other to Thomas and Benjamin Flint and their cousin, Llewellyn Bixby (Wentworth 1948:138). All of these men pioneered in improving the quality of California's sheep, and all acquired vast land holdings. Both as stockmen and as land owners, they influenced the growth of northeastern San Luis Obispo County (Angel 1883:215; Wentworth 1948:167; Young 1972:5; Pierce 1976:53, 103).

W.W. Hollister, his brother Joseph, their remarkable sister, Mrs. Lucy Brown, and a crew of 50 left Ohio with 9,000 sheep and 200 cattle (Guinn 1902:402; Wentworth 1948:169). In Utah the Hollisters joined the Flint-Bixby party, en route from Illinois with 2,000 sheep. The two groups arrived in Southern California at the end of December, 1853 (Wentworth 1948:138, 171; Flint 1923:53, 70-71).

Both families prospered. The Flints and Bixby rented pasture in San Jose, where they "...sheared our sheep and sold the clip ... Purchased about 1,000 sheep at $5.00 per head ... Sold 997 wethers for mutton at $16,000.00" (Flint 1923:75). Apparently, W.W. Hollister did equally well. In October, 1855, he and the Flint-Bixby family bought Rancho San Justo, a four square league portion of Rafael Gonzalez' original Rancho San Justo el Viejo y San Bernabe (Smith 1974:39; Cowan 1977:82).

By 1859, the flocks at San Justo had outgrown their range, and Flint, Bixby & Co. bought the Huer Huero (Angel 1883:173; Smith 1974:47). Sheep raising was a return to an earlier land use on the Huer Huero; Mission San Miguel had pastured flocks on its eastern ranches. The most important stock for the mission fathers, as for the rancheros, had been cattle, while Flint, Bixby & Co. and the Hollisters were primarily wool growers, carefully selecting and breeding their stock for high-quality fleece. Their production contributed to the developing American wool industry (Wentworth 1948:167; Cleland 1975:141).

During the 1860s the fortunes of sheepmen rose as those of cattle ranchers continued to fall. Cattlemen, already suffering from the price decline of a glutted market, lost stock in the floods of 1861-1862 and whole herds in the terrible drought of 1863-1864 (Cleland 1975:111, 130-131, 134-135).

> Cattle starved, and lingered, and died, not in parts of herds, but in totals. The country was devastated as if Genghis Kahn, or Timour the Tartar, had passed over it with their hosts, and fulfilling their boast that they left no living thing behind nor any verdure in their path. East of the Santa Lucia Range the destruction was not so complete. Messrs. James and Thompson, of the La Panza Rancho, and some others drove their stock to the marshes of the Tulare Valley and thus preserved the lives of a large portion of their herds (Angel 1883:222).

Sheep survived both the flood and the drought with less loss than cattle and became increasingly valuable "with the disruption of the cotton trade and the creation of a huge demand for wool during the Civil War" (Cleland 1975:141). The annual wool clip in California went from 175,000 pounds in 1854 to 6,500,000 in 1865, to a total in 1870 of 11,400,000 pounds (Cleland 1975:139).

Flint, Bixby & Co. and the Hollisters were raising fine quality sheep whose wool brought three times the price of fleeces from Mexican stock (Cleland 1975:140). With large flocks, abundant pasturage and a guaranteed market, all of these men rapidly grew rich. In 1862, W.W. and Joseph Hollister and the Dibblee brothers bought the first chunk of what soon became an impressive portion of Santa Barbara County (Wentworth 1948:170). By 1871, Flint, Bixby & Co. had expanded the Huer Huero from 15,685 to 46,835 acres, and their total holdings were 200,000 acres (Angel 1883:215; Pierce 1976:53).

W.W. Hollister, like Flint, Bixby & Co., established a large sheep raising operation in northeastern San Luis Obispo County, when he purchased Cholame Rancho in 1867 (Young 1972:5). It seems most probable that he moved his flocks from San Justo about that time, since he sold his land there in 1868 to the San Justo Homestead Association. The settlers promptly named their town for him (Pierce 1976:103). Hollister's main concerns, however, lay in Santa Barbara County, where he settled after the San Justo sale (Guinn 1902:402; Pierce 1976:103). In 1869, he sold a half interest in Cholame to Robert Edgar Jack "for $27,500 to be paid over a period of 10 years with Jack serving as ranch manager" (Young 1972:5).

R.E. Jack was to become one of the most prominent businessmen in San Luis Obispo County, and in many ways typified the nineteenth century entrepreneur. He entered the history of the Cholame Ranch, however, as a shadowy figure. Born in 1841 in Maine, he worked briefly for a shipping and commission house in New York in 1862, fought for the Union Army, also briefly, and arrived in California in either 1863 or 1864 (Angel 1883:389; Storke 1891:303; Guinn 1903:304). Recalling this time in the life of her father almost 90 years later, Ethel Jack observed that he

> chose between a life in the east, a life on the sea or a life in California, and went to work as a common ranch hand up at Hollister [then the San Justo Ranch] to get his start (McMillan 1968:28).

Although Jack was active in the business of Cholame, his management was mainly absentee. In 1870 he married Joseph Hollister's daughter, Nellie, and the couple were established in San Luis Obispo by 1871 (Guinn 1903:304; Jack House Collection: Correspondence).

Cholame, like the Huer Huero, had a clear title from the United States courts (above). With statehood, however, much of the area around the northeastern line of the canal had become government property. As public land, it was open to settlement by preemption, homesteading, mineral or timber claims, and direct purchase. Settlement was particularly encouraged by the Preemption Act of 1853, an 1855 provision granting 160 acres to veterans, and the Homestead Act of 1862.

Acquisition of government land began early in northeastern San Luis Obispo County. Drury James and John Thompson in 1860 "purchased 10,000 acres of Government land at La Panza at $1.25 an acre, and stocked it with 2,500 head of cattle" (Angel 1883:376). Flint, Bixby & Co., who, as noted above, tripled their holdings on the Huer Huero between 1859 and 1871, did so with the purchase of public land (Angel 1883:215). Following the Civil War, Phillip Biddle, Frederick Cox, and Crawford Clark similarly acquired vast acreages; Biddle for the California Ranch along San Juan Creek, and Cox and Clark for the Sacramento Ranch on the Estrella River (Harris 1874; Angel 1883:232, 304; Young 1972:5).

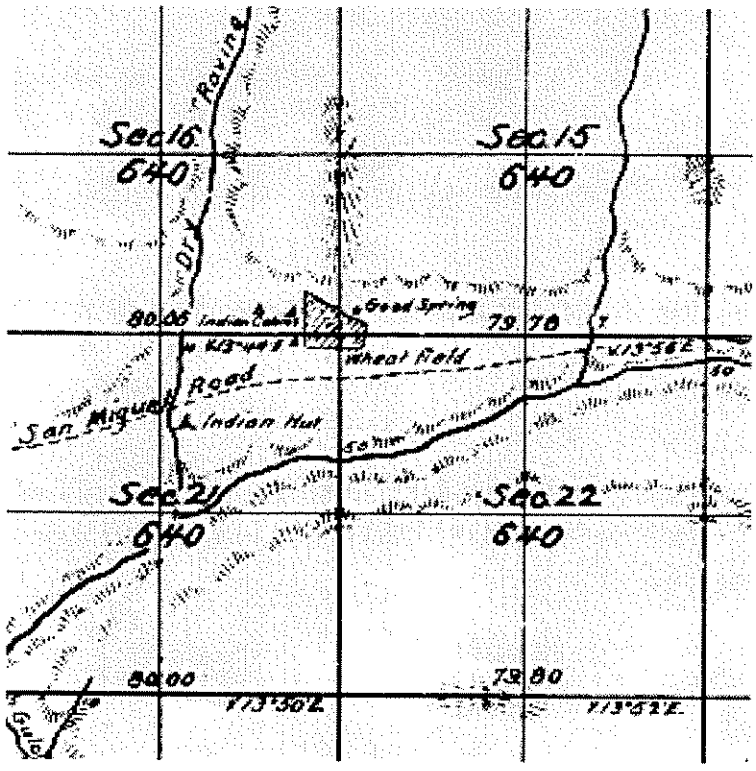


Figure 10. Bureau of Land Management Township Plat T26S R14E. "Four Indian cabins, a fine spring of water" and a fenced area which "contains about 6 acres of good, 1st rate land planted in wheat, barley and corn."

The land along the Estrella had been granted originally to the Indians of San Miguel Mission . Although the claim was denied, a few Indians continued to live on the ranch. In 1858, United States Deputy Surveyor B.M. Henry, sectioning north of the Estrella River in T26S R14E, "set post corner Sect. 15, 16, 21 & 22 in Indian wheat field. Capt. Pasqual." Henry recorded four "Indian cabins, (Fig. 10)" "a fine Spring of water," and a fenced area which "contains about 6 acres of good, 1st rate land and is planted with wheat, barley, and corn" (Bureau of Land Management Survey Notes, T26S R14E). The 1860 census noted three dwellings in this area that were occupied by Indians: Pasqual, farmer, and his wife; Anissmo, farmer, his children and Marcino, a farm laborer; and Antonio and Sartus, farm laborers. The fourth household was headed by a "stockraiser from Mexico" (U.S. Census, 1860, San Luis Obispo County, p. 9).

In the late 1860s, W.T. Sheid, for whom Shedd Canyon is misnamed, preempted the land; it appears on the 1874 county map as "Shied's." The map was approved by three county supervisors, including W.T. Sheid (Harris 1874). It is doubtful that Sheid would have approved his place in California ethnography. The Indian farmer listed in 1860 as "Anissmo" was Anesimo Bailon, who in 1887 contributed to the recording of the Migueleño dialect (Mason 1912:107). His daughter, Maria de Los Angeles, a child of eight in 1860, late in life provided invaluable information on the language and post-mission history of the Migueleño people (Harrington 1985: R. 87, Fr. 0323, R. 88, Fr. 0798). In 1932, while traveling through the Shandon Valley with ethnographer John P. Harrington, Maria de Los Angeles pointed out Sheid, or Shedd's, land. She described it as an old location of the Indians; "Shedd just came in and picked up the place and ran them off" (Harrington 1985: R.88, Frs. 0492, 0510, 0512).

East of Cholame Rancho, American settlement occurred almost entirely after 1870. United States Deputy Surveyor F.I. Saxe, sectioning T25S R17E in 1872, noted only one settler who had arrived before that year. J. McLure, for whom McLure's Valley was named, established a claim in Section 3 in 1866 or 1867. His place exemplified the smaller scale holdings of later settlers in the project area, contrasting with its vast ranches. McLure's improvements were "a house and small orchard with about 2 acres enclosed for raising hay" (Bureau of Land Management Survey Notes, T25S R17E).

How much use McLure made of McLure's (now Sunflower) Valley is not known. By the late 1850s, the area apparently was open range for cattle and bands of wild horses (Latta 1937:n.p.). In 1863 Francisco "Chico" Martinez began a profitable enterprise rounding up horses for sale. He caught them "all along the coast range hills from Sunflower Valley to Carneros Springs" until the mid-1870s (Morgan 1914:51; Latta 1937:n.p.).

The future of the Devil's Den area was foreshadowed in 1867, when test wells were drilled for "oil springs." Oil was found, but the lack of both drilling technology and adequate transportation, along with a low price for oil, postponed development of these deposits (Latta 1949:26, 59, 206).

To the west, transportation improved along the old Spanish route north from San Luis Obispo. When the city's first post office was opened in 1855, " a two-horse stage wagon" was contracted to run once a week between San Luis Obispo and Monterey:

> The roads were as nature offered them, and the passengers, after paying a good round price for their ride, were expected to work their way, pushing up the hills, holding the wagon from upsetting on the sliding places, and digging it out of the mud. The first day's journey was to San Miguel, where the stage remained over night; the next to Jolon, and the third day to Monterey (Angel 1883:312).

As stagecoach companies developed in California, they built roads and provided larger coaches and more frequent service. In 1862, the Coast Line Stage Company ran a four horse stage daily between San Francisco and Los Angeles, continuing the stops at Jolon, San Miguel, and San Luis Obispo (Angel 1883:312; Shoup 1982:182). The ever expanding Flint, Bixby & Company bought the Coast Line's route from San Juan Bautista to Los Angeles in 1868. Their road

improvements included a portion of the present Cuesta grade (Smith 1974:48-49; Shoup 1982:182).

One of the earliest enterprises to benefit from more regular, comfortable stagecoach service on the old route was Paso Robles Hot Springs. Daniel and James Blackburn and Lazare Godchaux began acquisition of the Paso de Robles Land Grant in 1857, later selling an interest to Drury James (Angel 1883:370, 376). Although most of the rancho was used for sheep and cattle, the partners decided to build a resort around the hot springs. Water from the springs was touted as a cure for a full spectrum of ailments, including:

> ...rheumatism, syphillis, gout, neuralgia, erysipelas, intermittent fever, eczema, psoriasis, affections of the womb, and diseases of the liver and kidney... Gentlemen whose long and assiduous devotion to Bacchus has at last resulted in worn-out stomachs and shattered nervous systems, and also those who are so unfortunate as to have become addicted to excessive use of opium and morphine, will be highly gratified at the marked improvement a short sojourn will make in their condition (Angel 1883:370).

By 1864, the resort boasted a two story hotel and stagecoach service to the door (Shoup 1982:258).

Growth and Diversity: 1870-1900

Settlers, Ranchers, and Miners

> August 8, 1884 we came to the Huer Huero District, which was to be our home. My father took a pre-emption on the land. He laid four boards in a square on the property they had chosen, until he could get to San Luis Obispo to file on it. We lived under a huge live oak tree all summer (Winnie Lee Moore, in Keyser 1964:33).

In the early 1870s, numerous settlers followed Shedd (above) to the land along the Estrella River. The area had been "regarded as a portion of some Mexican grant, and it was along in the "seventies before it was accurately known to be Government land and open to settlement" (Angel 1883:378).

When its official status was recognized, land in the area was claimed rapidly. The Estrella School, founded in 1872, had fifty pupils by 1876. The settlers farmed, rather than raising stock. They grew good crops, particularly wheat, in 1876 and 1878, but a general crop failure in 1879 forced some families to give up their land (Angel 1883:262, 378).

One reason for slower settlement in other areas of northeastern San Luis Obispo County was the same general belief that the land, like that of the Estrella region, was all privately owned. Where parcels on the large ranches were not contiguous, the owners bought up land around local springs, and ran their stock across the intervening areas (Young 1972:11).

Ranchers' use of government land is illustrated in this excerpt from a letter, dated November 11, 1872, to R.E. Jack:

> I have found out positively, and from good authority, that the land which Matthews located under the Agricultural College grant, and forfeited, does not cover the bitter water, and that the bitter water is on unsurveyed land. Carpenter, a Surveyor at the Paso Robles Springs, has sent to me two or three times for the field notes of the Southern boundary of Cholame. I have not, nor will not of course send them to him, but as he can, and may procure them from the Surveyor General's office or the Recorder's office in San Luis, you had better be on the look out for him. You know all the land is in the Ranch until it is found out to be otherwise, and then it is located with College Scrip (Jack House Collection: Correspondence Files).

Cholame Rancho was resurveyed in 1873, and Bitterwater was not included in its boundaries.

Events of 1872 which were to change the pattern of land use in northeastern San Luis Obispo County included: 1) the repeal of the No-Fence or Trespass Law; under this new regulation, stockmen, rather than farmers, became responsible for keeping their animals out of cropland; 2) the arrival of the Southern Pacific Railway at Salinas, then at Soledad in 1873, a precursor of the line that would increase population and promote agricultural growth; 3) the fall of inflated prices for wool which, combined with a drought year, began a downturn for the California sheep industry (Angel 1883:156; Cleland 1975:108-209; Nicholson 1980:9).

Cholame Rancho apparently continued to be profitable, despite the deflation of the wool market. R.E. Jack is reported to have paid off his half of the ranch in 1873 (Young 1972:5). It should be noted that Jack's father-in-law, Joseph Hollister, described as "one of the wealthy pioneers of San Luis Obispo County," died in January of that year (Storke 1891:326; Guinn 1903:304). Although Jack undoubtedly benefitted financially from his marriage into the Hollister family, his career demonstrated both drive and superb business acumen. He was later referred to as "the largest wool grower of Central California," and by 1900 was the sole owner of Cholame, which he had almost doubled in acreage (Guinn 1902:304; Jack House Collection: Business Files). Jack's prosperity was evident in 1875 during a widespread banking failure. He helped to keep the Bank of San Luis Obispo open by publicly stating that he "had on deposit $18,000...he declared his confidence in the bank and that the money should stay" (Angel 1883:61).

On the Santa Margarita, Patrick Murphy was a thriving cattle rancher. He repaired Estrada's adobe, which was referred to in 1870 as "the Santa Margarita mansion" (quoted in Angel 1883:364) and "entertained hundreds of visitors at barbecues and rodeos" (Nicholson 1980:69). Like R.E. Jack , Murphy was an officer of the Bank of San Luis Obispo and invested in other business ventures (Nicholson 1980:69). He also participated in California politics, serving as a state senator in 1865, 1867, and 1877, and as a member of the State Assembly in 1881 (*California Blue Book* 1907:556). Soon after the death of his father in 1884, Murphy inherited the vast holdings of the Santa Margarita (*San Francisco Call*, Oct. 21, 1884:7; Nicholson 1980:67, 69).

Santa Margarita roundup circa 1870. Horseman in the center is Patrick Murphy. From the archives of the San Luis Obispo County Historical Society.

The 1874 map of San Luis Obispo County shows "sheep camps" as the only development around the Huer Huero Ranch (Harris 1874). Patrick O'Donovan and his family, among the first settlers in the area, arrived that year. O'Donovan homesteaded and bought government land, acquiring 1840 acres in all, on which he raised "Durham cattle, hogs, and grain" (Keyser 1964:31).

O'Donovan's choice of stock may have been influenced by the depressed wool market. In 1876-1877, a severe drought devastated the over-expanded California sheep industry, as the dry years of 1863-1864 had stricken the cattle business (Cleland 1975:209). Some stockmen around the area gave up their holdings. The Bean brothers, in the dry land near the head of San Juan Creek, owned 5,000 sheep in 1876, "...but during that year one-half died, and the remainder were sold at seventy-five cents per head" (Angel 1883:184). At San Miguel, "ten cents apiece was reckoned as a fair price for sheep" in the summer of 1877 (Angel 1883:377). Wool production in San Luis Obispo County sank from 1,500,000 pounds in 1876 to 933,668 pounds in 1882 (Angel 1883:224-225).

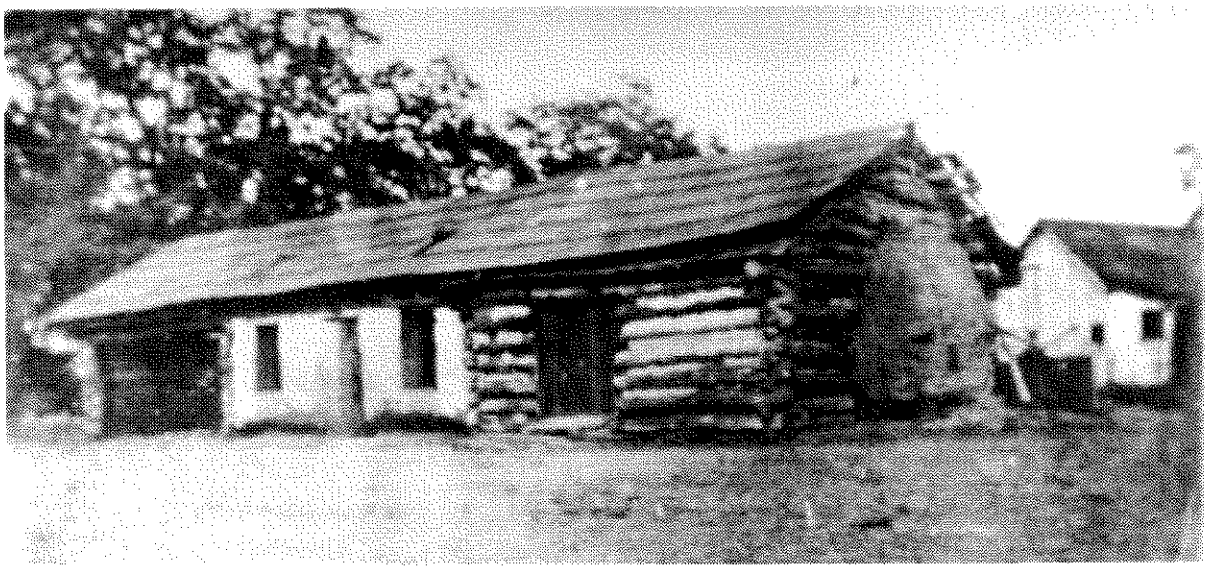
Flint, Bixby & Co. continued their operation on the Huer Huero, but Sarah Bixby Smith recalled that in the 1870s her father traveled from the home ranch at San Justo on "necessary trips" to what he called the "Worry Worry" ranch (Smith 1974:47).

Periodic drought and the aridity of the eastern section of the county affected even the area's gold rush. Gold apparently had been taken out of upper San Juan Creek during Mexican rule, but the reports of successful mining in 1878 brought several hundred men to La Panza (Angel 1883:248; Clark 1970:179).

> Numerous quartz veins have been found, showing gold, but no machinery has been erected for crushing the ore. The gold is altogether obtained from the placers by cradle and sluice washing. The want of water is the chief obstacle to successful mining (Angel 1883:250).

La Panza, from the San Juan and tributary streams, yielded about $100,000 in gold by 1888. Mining on a small scale continued into the early twentieth century (Clark 1970:179). In the 1880 census, "La Panza gold mines" were the largest settlement in eastern San Luis Obispo County, which had an average population of "one person to the square mile" (Angel 1883:363).

In the late 1870s and early 1880s, however, more settlers were establishing their homes on government land in the Huer Huero area. Patrick O'Donovan, "at his own expense, built the first school house in this part of the country. It was a 12x24 ft structure of logs and shakes" (Keyser 1964:31). Noted in 1882 as a "new district," the Huer Huero School served fifteen children from local families (Angel 1883:258, 263).



Log and adobe schoolhouse in the Huer Huero district. Photo taken by Don McMillan. From the archives of the San Luis Obispo County Historical Society.

The County Superintendent of Schools, attempting to find the school on a tour of inspection in May, 1882, graphically presents the sparse settlement of northeastern San Luis Obispo County:

> ...we crossed the Salinas River, and wended our way up through Rocky Canon and over the ridge to the Huer-Huero Ranch. Arrived here, we scanned the roadside carefully to find some road leading into the settlement. After traveling more than two miles, we concluded that we had already gone too far, and turned back. Turning off and following a single wagon track through the tall grass, we at length emerged into a dim road, which we followed over hill and dale, and finally up a sandy canon of more meanderings, that seemed miles, to the place of Mr. Moody. Here we were directed to cross the ridge to another branch of the Huer-Huero, and descend the stream to Mr. Donovan's, which we did, and were there directed to tie up our steed and walk one-half mile towards Mr. Moody's. Having done so, we arrived late in the afternoon at the school, having driven ten

> or twelve miles, to really go a distance of about three. This school is presided over by Mr. Jack L. Dunn, a practical printer, who is also a graduate of the Warrensburg, Missouri, Normal School. The school house, though made of logs, is comfortable. It is situated in a sequestered glen, with a cool spring near it . . . much has already been done to make here a good school. Lessons good, order fair, room neat, enthusiasm at par, and the general make-up of the school quite encouraging. The Trustees are Messrs. Morgan, Moody, and Donovan (Angel 1883:263).

Winnie Lee Moore, whose family settled in the Huer Huero area in 1884, recalled the school from a pupil's point of view:

> The first school in the Huer Huero District was made of logs. It also was used for Sunday school and church with most of the settlers attending.
>
> The desks and benches were home made, with holes for ink wells to set in. A place for books underneath. The black board was black oil cloth tacked lightly to the wall. Slates were used instead of paper. The school had no ceiling and the logs were not [hewn].
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Most of the young children went barefoot and caught polly-wogs in the water ditch during recess. The spring we drank from is still there, and full of water.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Johnny Cliff, Guy Marshall and another boy was lined up on a bench while Mrs. Hornsby switched their legs for not minding. I was hit on the hands with a ruler for not knowing how to spell cat, then sent outside to cry. Martha O'Leary was sent out several times to find out if I had stopped crying. She told me to pretend to cry each time, and I could stay outside the remainder of the day (Winnie Lee Moore, in Keyser 1964:35-36).

Mrs. Moore described the pioneer life of her family, relating that the neighbors helped to build their log cabin and to dig a well:

> In time we got some chickens and a cow and planted a garden. We all carried water from the well for the garden. Butter and eggs were traded for various merchandise at Gruenhagen's store [in Creston]. Once or twice a year supplies were bought from Sinsheimer's store in San Luis Obispo....We raised wheat for our live stock. Later on the wheat was hauled to Paso Robles and made into flour...
>
> There was a wild animal trail past our house, all kinds of animals traveled it. Lion, wild cats, coyote and deer which we often saw. Lion came to drink from the watering trough at night. One moonlight night our mother had us peek out the window and watch a big lion drink, as she wanted us to know what they were. She then piled chairs, tables and other heavy objects against the window fearing the lion would try to get in. She had no gun and my father was away. Another

> time a huge rattle snake was under the house. It rattled when my mother used the sewing machine. After the lumber in the floor dried it left wide cracks. The snake would strike her dress through the cracks as she sewed....(Winnie Lee Moore, in Keyser 1964:33-34).

At the time Mrs. Moore's family settled in the isolated land of the Huer Huero, the "private village" of Paso Robles Hot Springs was thriving. The only concentration of urban amenities anywhere in the northeastern county during the early 1880s, the resort offered its guests a hotel, cottages, "store, billiard saloon, express, telegraph, and post-offices, reading-room, and barber shop, physicians' office..." (Angel 1883:370; Nicholson 1980:89).

The Southern Pacific Line and the Land Boom

In 1886, the isolation of northeastern San Luis Obispo County ended. The Southern Pacific, twelve years after bringing its line to Soledad, began construction to the south in 1885. Land speculators, working ahead of the railroad and in some instances influencing its route, subdivided large ranches, laid out towns, and advertised widely for settlers (Nicholson 1980:16, 18, 45-46).

Flint, Bixby and Co., during 1884 and 1885, sold Rancho Huer Huero to Thomas Ambrose, Amos Adams, C.J. Cressey, and J. V. Webster. The buyers began tentative development of the Creston townsite, but by March 1886, they had sold the controlling interest in the Huer Huero to Chauncey H. Phillips (Keyser 1964:5,7; Nicholson 1980:16). The foremost developer in San Luis Obispo County, Phillips had begun subdividing ranchos on the coast in 1875 (Cooper 1875:30).

Immediately after acquiring control of the Huer Huero, Phillips organized the West Coast Land Company. It was incorporated on March 27, 1886, for the "purchase, development and sale of the land which comprised the ranchos El Paso de Robles, Santa Ysabel, and Eureka, and the unsold balance of the Huer Huero, a total of 64,000 acres" (Nicholson 1980:17-18).

The West Coast Land Company's brochure of September 6, 1886, advertised:

> The Huer-Huero Ranch
>
> This ranch comprises 8,000 acres of valley land, 23,000 acres of level and rolling farm land, and 15,000 acres of grazing hills. There is no waste land on the ranch. During the past two years, since May 1884, 34,000 acres have been sold to settlers...(West Coast Land Company 1886:22).

Among the settlers listed were the men who had sold to Phillips, including J. V. Webster, who had established an orchard and vineyard, and C. J. Cressey, who was farming wheat.

As the Huer Huero was subdivided into ranches and small farms, the town of Creston developed. Some of the settlers who had been struggling on poor land to the south and east bought parcels on the rancho, or set up businesses in the town (Nicholson 1980:16-17). Creston flourished, with a new school built in 1889. The town "not only supported three saloons, but it had a bakery, two

churches, two rooming houses, three blacksmith shops, as well as a grocery store and a second-hand store" (Keyser 1964:5, 17). Creston also served as the town center for nearby communities, including those of Iron Springs, to the southwest, the German settlement at Geneseo, and the Swedish settlement at Linne, both to the northwest (Henderson 1890; Keyser 1964:5).

The West Coast Land Company's property sold briskly, and in 1888 the company bought ranch land in the Shandon Valley. The townsite of Shandon was laid out in 1890; the town absorbed the nearby settlement known as Starkey (Morrison and Haydon 1917:167; Young 1972:30; Nicholson 1980:50, 71). In McMillan Canyon, the family of Dick White, who had homesteaded with the McMillans in 1885, arrived to settle in 1888. Because of the land boom, "they were unable to homestead land...they were forced to buy 320 acres at $12 an acre from the West Coast Land Company" (Young 1972:23).

Some of the settlers in Shandon and Creston hopefully set out orchards, but were discouraged by extremes of temperature and the need for irrigation in arid country (Morrison and Haydon 1917:167; Young 1972:15, 19). The staple crop in the 1880s and 1890s was dry-land wheat, watered only by the winter rains (Angel 1883:378; Morrison and Haydon 1917:92,167-168; Young 1972:19). The wheat was hauled for milling, shipment, and warehousing to Paso Robles. Laid out near the resort when the railroad went through, the new town was booming (Morrison and Haydon 1917:167; McMillan 1972:36; Young 1972:19; Nicholson 1980:89).

Blackburn and James, owners of Paso Robles Hot Springs, retained some of the Paso de Robles Rancho, but the West Coast Land Company "successfully persuaded" the Southern Pacific to run the railroad across a portion of the ranch that the company had acquired. The town of Templeton was laid out there in September 1886, with town lots, farms, and ranches for sale. In November, the line arrived at Templeton, where Southern Pacific constructed a turntable and a roundhouse (Nicholson 1980:45-47).

Templeton continued to grow, and the West Coast Land Company to flourish. Work on the railroad, however, came to a halt, despite the strenuous efforts of Phillips and other San Luis Obispo businessmen. One cause of delay was Southern Pacific's demands on the next property to the south: the Santa Margarita Rancho. Apparently Patrick Murphy was willing to grant a free right-of-way across his land, but he wanted a financial stake in the required 640-acre townsite. Murphy and the railroad's officials came to terms in April, 1888 (Nicholson 1980:69-71). The discouraged editor of the *Tribune* commented:

> With the careful consideration of its own interests, which marks the operations of the Southern Pacific, and which unfortunately prevents it from noticing how the interests of others are affected by its action, the railroad crept on to a dead stop at Templeton, paralyzing the business connection of this city with the eastern and northern part of the county. Now, apparently, a new Templeton is projected on the Santa Margarita, to be followed by an indefinite postponement of all further work (*San Luis Obispo Tribune*, quoted in Nicholson 1980:71).

The editor's prediction was accurate. Rail construction began at Templeton in October 1888, and was finished to the townsite of Santa Margarita in 1889. The town had been laid out, and lots

were auctioned off in April, with Patrick Murphy announcing that he would soon sell thousands of acres on the rancho as farm land, making the new town a farm center (*The Daily Republic*, April 22, 1889). The only work on the railroad south of Santa Margarita, however, was the grading of a roadbed to the site of the projected first tunnel through the Cuesta; work did not resume until January 1892 (Nicholson 1980:125-126).

Santa Margarita, as the railroad's terminus, soon had a business section, and boomed when rail construction resumed. Along the line, Templeton, San Miguel, and particularly Paso Robles prospered (Nicholson 1980:26,89,131,151; Krieger 1988:81). While these towns developed and later, when the railroad was being pushed through the pass, business was brisk on the Cuesta road. The best known establishment was that of the Bean Brothers, "successful farmers and horticulturists, as well as hotel-keepers," who bought land near the top of the grade in 1877, set out a large fruit orchard, and built their inn, the Eight-Mile House. Their facilities included "capacious stables" and "a large dancing hall" (Angel 1883:134). The dance hall was later moved to Santa Margarita (Miossi 1975:36); the Bean brothers also established the "Hotel Margarita" in town (Nicholson 1980:157). Epifanio Boronda's inn and saloon, opened in the 1880s one mile south of Eight-Mile House, and was reportedly "a place of great revelry" (Dana 1971:9; Miossi 1975:36-37; Nicholson 1980:73). Alonzo Dana, a Boronda descendant, recalled Great Uncle Epifanio describing bullfights on the grounds of the inn (Dana 1971:11).

In the general prosperity of the late 1880s and early 1890s, R.E. Jack's career boomed like the railroad towns. Nicholson (1980:18) describes him in 1886 as "a prominent banker, businessman and rancher, whose power was increasing each year." In 1886, he was a founding member and officer of the West Coast Land Company; in 1887, of the San Luis Obispo Board of Trade and the California Southern Hotel Company; in 1889, of San Luis Obispo's committee to bring the railroad to the town (Nicholson 1980:8, 55, 61-63, 95-97). By 1890, he was an officer in three banks in San Luis Obispo County and one in Santa Barbara County (Storke 1891:303). Jack went on to become the mayor of San Luis Obispo in 1893, and one of the local heroes when the Southern Pacific brought its line through to the city in 1894 (Nicholson 1980:147;175). His best known accolade, however, was probably an article in the *San Francisco Examiner* in December, 1890, honoring Jack as a millionaire and the richest citizen of San Luis Obispo County (Nicholson 1980:120).

Depression and Drought

The later 1890s brought harder times for Jack and the county as a whole. The effects of the nationwide financial panic of 1893 and the ensuing depression were compounded by the earlier overspeculation in land and by another drought cycle in 1897-1898 (Young 1972:25; Krieger 1988:82). Jack had been a founder of the County Bank of San Luis Obispo:

> For a time this institution had a prosperous existence, but the long-prevailing drought which affected every industry of this region, so crippled the bank's resources that it was forced to go into the receiver's hands (Guinn 1903:304).

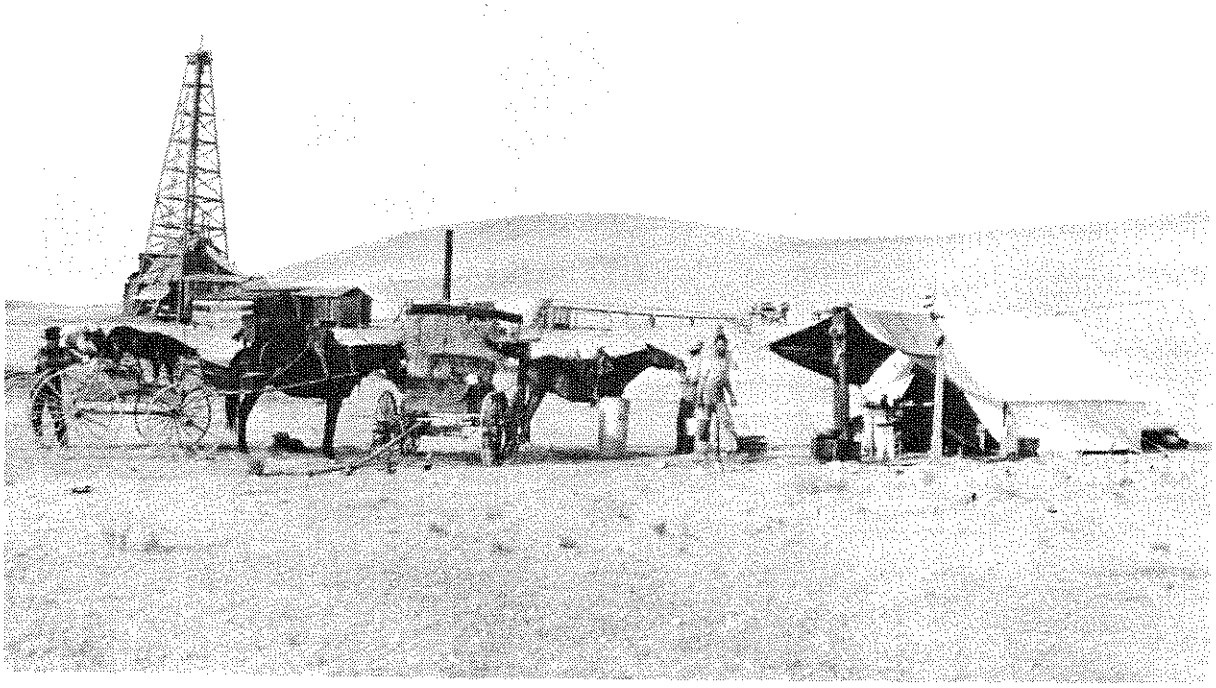
For the first time in its known history, since the founding of the *asistencia* in the early nineteenth century, the abundantly watered Santa Margarita suffered from drought. In 1898, Patrick

Murphy took his cattle off the ranch (Young et al. 1902:44). He sold the Santa Margarita in 1900 to Ferdinand Reis, a San Francisco banker (Young et al. 1902:33; Clarke Publishing Company 1913:202; Kathy Loftus, personal communication, 1994).

Settlers in the northeastern county lost their land when crops failed, or as they could not sustain their farms in the depressed market (Young 1972:25). Reversing the 1880s pattern of smaller holdings - homesteading on modest acreages and the subdivision of vast properties for small farms - owners of larger ranches now bought out some of the discouraged settlers.

The Devil's Den Oil District

East of the Temblor Range, little settlement had occurred in and around the line of the canal. United States Deputy Surveyor John H. Garber, describing T25S R18E in 1901, observed that:



Oilmen in the Devil's Den Oil District circa 1900. Courtesy of the Huntington Library.

> The land is used by wandering sheep men for grazing purposes, who procure the water necessary for their herds by pumping it from wells located in other parts of this and adjoining townships.... I could not learn of any homestead or preemption settlers occupying any part of these lands surveyed by me, and know of no one living permanently on any part of the township (Bureau of Land Management Survey Notes, T25S R18E).

The surveyor, however, recorded a major change in land use:

> Most, or all, of the land surveyed by me has been located as oil lands. Oil has not been found in any paying quantities....This is known as the Devil's Den Oil District (Bureau of Land Management Survey Notes, T25S R18E).

The unsuccessful test wells at Devil's Den in 1867 had come at the end of California's first oil boom. After the rush to Titusville, Pennsylvania, in 1859, when the world's first oil well was brought in, prospectors began exploring California seeps and asphalt deposits (Welty and Taylor 1958:8; Rintoul 1990:2-5). Wells were sunk, but most of the oil was tunneled out or recovered as a byproduct of asphalt mining; the crude was distilled for kerosene or lubricating oil (Rintoul 1990:4). In the mid-1860s "some 65 oil companies [were] operating from Humboldt County south to Ventura" (Rintoul 1990:5). California's boom was ended by 1867, however, by a glut of eastern oil:

> With the end of the Civil War, crude production in Pennsylvania jumped more than 70 percent. The flow of crude through eastern refineries made a large volume of products available for shipment west, driving down the price of kerosene from $1.70 or more a gallon in 1865 to 54 cents or less two years later (Rintoul 1990:5).

Oil exploration continued in California, however, particularly in the southern counties (Welty and Taylor 1958:26-27). Prospectors from the 1870s into the 1890s included men who had gained experience in the Pennsylvania fields. In 1876, a derrick builder from Titusville drilled "the best and most spectacular oil well drilled up to that time in the Golden State," Pico No.4, which flowed 150 barrels a day (Welty and Taylor 1958:26). The well demonstrated the possibilities of oil production in California, although it was not an archetype; as late as 1895, wells were kept open that yielded only five barrels a day (Watts 1897:35). Equipment improved, as cable-tool drilling, originally used by the Chinese to obtain brine, was gradually adapted for oil wells. By the 1890s, drilling rigs were powered by steam (Rintoul 1976:21).

The increasing development of the Coalinga and McKittrick oil fields in the 1890s (Watts 1900:126-127, 137) was most probably responsible for the location of oil claims at Devil's Den. By 1900, four companies were drilling prospect wells in the Devil's Den District, but there were no producing wells (Watts 1900:132).

The Twentieth Century

The little towns of Creston and Shandon survived the hard times around the turn of the century, and the settlements at Cholame acquired both a post office and a school (Parsons 1913). As noted above, however, many of the settlers sold out and moved on. By 1904, R.E. Jack had "bought out the settlers during the past 36 years to the extent of 35,000 acres," increasing the Cholame Rancho to 53,000 acres (Jack House Collection: Business Files). Despite the acquisition of land, Jack's ranching operation at Cholame was evidently in trouble as the century turned. The ranch was "not heavily stocked" in 1900, and 8,000 acres were planted to wheat. By 1904, Jack had replaced sheep with cattle. In September of that year, Cholame was advertised for sale:

> It has been the owner's intention never to part with the Ranch for less than $25 an acre, but feeling that the ranch takes too much of his personal attention, and having devoted a little more than a third of a Century to this property, has decided to sell it. And to expedite matters and to effect a speedy sale has offered the ranch at $18.00 per acre...(Jack House Collection: Business Files).

The ranch remained on the market for several years. In 1909, Howard Jack, one of R.E.'s sons, took over its management. The ranch became his home and the center of his life (Young 1972:5; Nicholson 1973:21). In June, 1949, Don McMillan, son of the pioneer family, described the roundup at Cholame:

> Calves and cows bawling, dust boiling, horses plunging hither and yon, cowboys yipping. Yes, siree the old Cholame Rancho, one of the few remaining old time ranches, are branding 1,600 head of calves again. And, scorning all these new fangled straight jackets that so many use to strap their calves in nowadays, Howard Jack still has 'em headed and heeled in the good old-fashioned way (McMillan 1968:27).

Vast holdings and cattle grazing in northeastern San Luis Obispo County repeated the land use patterns of Mission San Miguel. By 1917, Henry Wreden's San Juan Ranch, at 59,175 acres, exceeded the property on the Cholame. C.W. Clark's Sacramento Ranch covered 48,002 acres; and the Estrella, owned by "the Hellmans of Los Angeles," encompassed 42,643 acres (Morrison and Haydon 1917:96). At that time, wheat was raised

> on portions of the Sacramento, Cholame, Estrella, San Juan and La Panza ranches, but cattle are the main dependence. Thousands of them are driven to stations on the Southern Pacific and shipped to the San Francisco market (Morrison and Haydon 1917:96).

About 1900, however, smaller scale farmers around Shandon had altered the use of their land. They began irrigating, principally for alfalfa, later adding row crops (Young 1972:33-34).

The Producers Pipeline

The greatest change for both ranchers and farmers came with mechanization, as "the costly and uncertain toy of the wealthy" early in the century became "the essential tool of the toiler and more especially of the farmer" (Brooks 1917:195). In 1909, the year that Howard Jack took over management of his "old time ranch," pipe was laid across Cholame which would help to fuel the automotive age.

California's oil industry had been growing fitfully since the 1880s, and it boomed after the discovery of the great Kern River field near Bakersfield in 1899:

> Within three years some two thousand four hundred oil companies filed incorporation papers; most of this number sold more or less stock, while at least twelve hundred companies did some actual drilling. Again the State was

> punctured from one end to the other....while the percentage of failures was of course very large, yet the wildcatters did develop several hundred wells in entirely new territory...(Aubury 1904:10-11).

In 1900, the state's oil production was 4,329,950 barrels; the yield in 1903 of 24,382,000 barrels made California the top oil producing state in the nation (Aubury 1904:12; Rintoul 1990:12). The great boost in quantity, however, lowered the per barrel price, driving some of the smaller companies out of business (Aubury 1904:10-11). Independent firms also came under pressure from the large companies who controlled bulk buying and transport. In 1904:

> ...the independent producer in the Kern fields was absolutely at the mercy of the Standard Oil Company and the Associated Oil Company. These companies owned the only pipe lines transporting oil from those fields. The independent producer had to either sell his oil to these companies at prices named by them, or else not sell his oil at all. The same condition exists in the Coalinga fields with the result that many of the producers, being unable to procure what they considered to be a fair contract price for the transportation of their oil, were compelled to take the only other alternative and shut down their wells (Railroad Commission, in McLaughlin 1914:481-482).

To combat these monopolies, operators in the Kern fields established the Independent Oil Producers Agency in 1904. By 1909, the organization included 150 companies, mainly from the San Joaquin Valley (Railroad Commission, in McLaughlin 1914:481, 491; Rintoul 1976:96). In June, 1909, the Agency set up the Producers Transportation Company, in partnership with Union Oil, a rival of both Standard and Associated (above). Union Oil agreed to market crude from the Agency members at a fair price and to provide major capital for a pipeline from the San Joaquin Valley to Avila for coastal shipping (Railroad Commission, in McLaughlin 1914:482; Rintoul 1976:96-98).

Wallace Hardison and Lyman Stewart, founders of Union Oil, had pioneered in California oil transportation. Both were experienced operators from the Pennsylvania fields and arriving in Los Angeles County in 1883, they set up a small wildcatting company (Welty and Taylor 1958:30-31). In 1886, the company was producing enough oil to build the first pipeline "from field to tidewater;" the line ran 40 miles from Newhall to Ventura, and oil was "shipped by water at less than half the rail rate to San Francisco" (Welty and Taylor 1958:38). In 1889, the partners built a short- lived wooden vessel which was a landmark, however, as the first oil tanker (Welty and Taylor 1948:46). Hardison and Stewart incorporated as Union Oil in 1890, and their firm grew rapidly. Union's output of 101,901 barrels in 1892 was almost a third of California's oil production that year (Watts 1900:217; Welty and Taylor 1958:50, 60). In 1895, the company produced over 200,000 barrels in Ventura County alone, and transported "nearly all the oil produced in Ventura County through 100 miles of pipe line" (Watts 1897:47).

On July 29, 1909, less than six weeks after Union Oil and the Agency signed their agreement, the Producers Transportation Company began pipeline construction.

> The pipeline the company decided upon was a tremendous undertaking for the time; it called for 280 miles of pipe, fifteen pumping stations, field tankage to store twenty-seven million barrels of oil, and wharf facilities at Port Harford [Avila] (Rintoul 1976:98).

Lines were brought to Junction Pumping Station in southern Antelope Valley from the Coalinga, Maricopa, Midway, McKittrick, Kern River, Lost Hills, and Belridge fields (Railroad Commission, in McLaughlin 1914:482). From Junction, "the line snaked west to Avila, via Antelope, Shandon, Creston, Santa Margarita stations and San Luis Obispo tank farm" (Rintoul 1976:99). Four crews of 100 to one 125 men worked on the line, starting from Coalinga, McKittrick, Junction, and the coast terminal. Construction required eight and ten horse teams; 540 horses were employed on the project (Rintoul 1976:100).

As the pipe was laid, more storage tanks were planned for the Maricopa field, resulting in one of California's oil legends. A small wildcatting company had drilled to 1340 feet near Maricopa, and had run out of money for further work. Union Oil, on neighboring land, offered to drill in exchange for 51% of the company's stock and the right to build Producers' tanks on the property. Union's crews, drilling three other locations, worked on the wildcat well sporadically:

> On the morning of March 15, 1910, drilling had reached a depth of 2,225 feet when a column of oil shot from the ground, setting in motion a progression of events that would destroy the derrick, flood surrounding land with oil and ultimately drive the price of oil down to 30 cents a barrel.
>
> Nine days after the well blew in, flowing at rates estimated as high as 125,000 barrels a day, *California Oil World* reported of the well, 'It's hell, literally hell. It roars and rips like hell. It mounts, surges and sweeps like hell. It smells and terrifies like hell. It is as uncontrolled as hell. It is as black and hot as hell...Some of those who watched it the first night declared that it ejected glowing stones' (quoted in Rintoul 1990:15).

The well, Lakeview No. 1, was California's largest gusher. It flowed for 18 months, producing an estimated nine million barrels of oil. Despite emergency dams, canals, pipelines, and reservoirs, only four million barrels were saved (Rintoul 1976:110-111, 113).

The Producers pipeline went into operation later in March, 1910, pumping 30,000 barrels a day (Rintoul 1976:102). Early problems included difficulty in pumping heavy crude, and contamination caused by changing grades of oil (McLaughlin 1914:88; Rintoul 1976:102). Troubles on the line between Junction Station and Avila are recorded in this excerpt from Producers' logs:

> Junction Station. February 23, 1913, 5:05 a.m. Started pumping 31.8° gravity oil at speed of 1,000 barrels per hour. February 27th, 3:00 a.m., total delivery 46,874 barrels.

> Avila, February 26th, 1.00 a.m., gravity 25°. February 28th, total receipts 45,244 barrels. Average gravity 27.3°.
>
> Incoming gravity rose gradually from 28° to 30.9°. Last ten hours very irregular, from 31° to 19°. Result: 12,000 barrels contaminated; 1,630 barrels lost (McLaughlin 1914:88-89).

Despite difficulties on the line, the company handled 19,363,991 barrels of oil in 1912 (McLaughlin 1914:90).

Pumps at the early stations were steam powered, "with exhaust steam being used to heat the heavy crude and reduce its viscosity" (Rintoul 1976:99). Each station was operated by a crew; this was a monthly payroll in 1912:

2 engineers.....$195.00
2 firemen.....170.00
1 boiler washer.....75.00
1 teamster.....65.00
1 gauger.....100.00
(McLaughlin 1914:90)

"Pipeline walkers patrolled the line, equipped with horse-drawn vehicles carrying emergency supplies" to check for leaks, but within a few years, the line was checked by automobile (Rintoul 1976:102-103).

The Producers Transportation Company, formed in 1909 to counter oil monopolies in the San Joaquin Valley, was itself found by the Railroad Commission's 1914 hearings on pipelines as common carriers to be a functioning monopoly:

> In considering the monopolistic features of the oil pipe line business in California we desire first to refer to the history of the Producers Transportation Company. It was claimed that the presence of this company in the field prevented any monopoly in the oil pipe line business. The record, however, shows that while the Producers Transportation Company prevented monopoly in the oil pipe line business when that company was first created, it can not be expected to indefinitely exert this beneficent influence (Railroad Commission, in McLaughlin 1914:491).

The company, of which Union Oil owned "all the stock, except qualifying shares," was charged with monopolistic practices. Union was also among the large companies described as price fixing:

> The record is specific that the General Petroleum Company adopts the price named by the Standard Oil Company; that representatives of the Associated Oil Company and the Union Oil Company frequently confer upon the price to be offered the independent producer, and that no company has ever underbid a price

> named by the Associated Oil Company.... It is clearly evident that these large oil companies in the San Joaquin Valley control the price at which the independent producer is required to sell his oil to them (Railroad Commission, in McLaughlin 1914:493).

In 1917, Union Oil bought out the Producers Transportation Company and became sole owner of the pipeline (Welty and Taylor 1958:131; cf. *California Oil World*, May 26, 1921, p. 93). The line is operated today by Unocal, Union Oil's parent company since 1983 (Pederson 1990:n.p.). Pumping stations are now automated, and the line walker has been replaced with a low flying plane (Rintoul 1976:103).

The Devil's Den area, though crossed by pipelines and dotted with exploratory wells, has not produced large quantities of oil. In 1921, "the so-called Devils Den field" was defined as "nothing more than a series of seepages at the contact of the Santa Margarita and McKittrick formations" (Vander Leck 1921:169). A few low output wells were noted here in 1943, with a larger number described as idle or abandoned (Van Couvering and Allen 1943:500-501).

Creston: the Pipeline and New Orchards

Business in the town of Creston had dwindled until "only the fact that the Union Oil Company built a pumping station in 1909 kept the town alive" (Keyser 1964:5). Men from the area worked on construction of the pipeline, and the completed station provided ten to twelve full-time jobs (Keyser 1964:5).

The town, diminished from its rapid growth around 1890, was described in 1917 as:

> ...a small village with a general store and post office, a blacksmith shop, a few houses and a schoolhouse. It is...reached by daily stage carrying mail and passengers between Paso Robles and Creston (Morrison and Haydon 1917:154).

The Creston area, however, prospered again after World War I when the Associated Almond Growers planted 5,000 acres, "the largest almond orchard in the world" (Keyser 1964:29).

> Those orchards provided work for local people through the years, without such work, many would not have been able to have stayed during the 20's, 30's as well as the 40's (Keyser 1964:6).

Although the orchards far outlasted those planted by the settlers of the 1880s, inadequate rainfall gradually destroyed the trees. They were pulled out and sold as firewood, and the land was returned to grains and cattle pasture in the 1950s (Keyser 1964:6, 29).

Military Training on Western Ranch Land

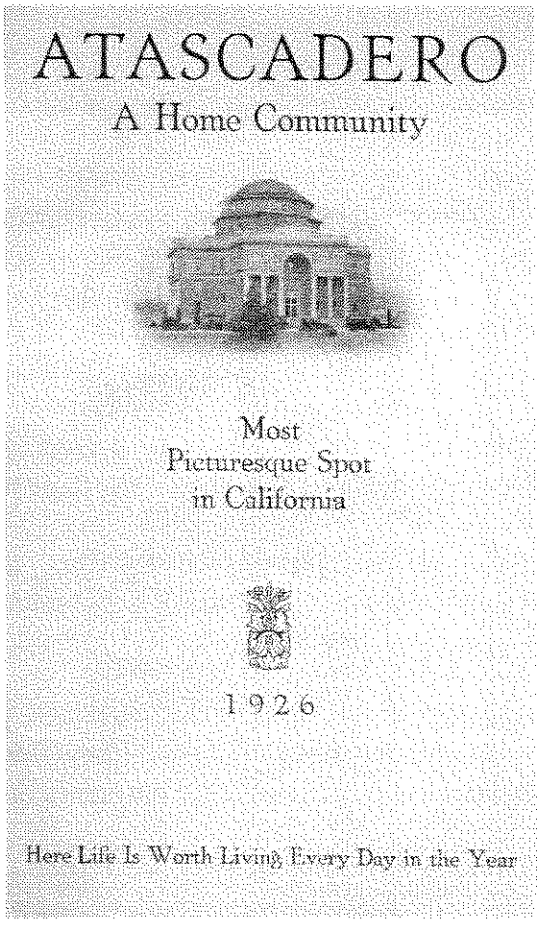
A Congressional committee arrived at the Santa Margarita in January, 1902, to consider the ranch as the site for a military post. The committee's report was favorable, noting "a level plain eminently suitable for maneuvering" and that the asking price of $350,000 "appears to be

reasonable" (Young et al. 1902:33). When the sale did not go through, Ferdinand Reis stocked his land with sheep; by 1914, the Santa Margarita was again a cattle ranch (Kathy Loftus, personal communication, 1994).

During the August heat wave of 1904, 4,500 troops camped and maneuvered near present-day Atascadero (Rawson 1991:15-16). The encampment of 1908, with more knowledgeable planning, took place in October, "upon the tableland immediately adjoining the plain. . . a great improvement over the location of 1904, which was on the plain itself" (General J.B. Lauck, quoted in Maus 1909:26). Colonel Maus, commanding officer in 1908, reported attendance of "between 4,000 and 5,000 officers and men, composed of nearly equal numbers of regular and national guard troops" (Maus 1909:29). During the maneuver of October 27:

> Blue troops are operating from the north in Salinas Valley; Red troops from the south. An advance base of the Reds at Templeton is being withdrawn to Santa Margarita on account of the rapid advance of the Blues on the east bank of the Salinas river, which can be forded only with difficulty. Last evening—October 26— the Blues interrupted the railroad south of Templeton (Maus 1909:32).

Troops camped and trained on J.H. Henry's 23,000-acre Rancho del Encinal, which Colonel Maus praised as a training site. The success of the maneuvers, he wrote, demonstrated the value of yearly encampments, and he urged the federal government to acquire "permanent grounds for the use of our troops" on the Pacific Coast (Maus 1909:28,37). The California National Guard's Camp San Luis Obispo was established in the 1920s, and Colonel Maus's advice foreshadowed the development of both Camp San Luis Obispo and Camp Roberts during World War II.



Front page of a promotional brochure for the Atascadero Colony.

The Atascadero Colony

The Rancho del Encinal was sold in 1913 to E. G. Lewis, promoter of the Atascadero Colony (Travis n.d.:5). In comparison with Lewis, Chauncey Phillips and the West Coast Land Company (Growth and Diversity, above) seem almost timid. Like the Army in 1908, Lewis in 1914 and 1915 set up tent cities on the ranch land. He invited potential buyers to live in the tents, and pushed the sale of residential lots and small farms in what was to be an agrarian Utopia. Lewis immediately began laying out orchards and a system of roads. By early 1916, the colony's administration building, a printshop, and the first settlers' homes

were nearing completion; later that year, work began on a department store, the Atascadero Inn, and the community's school (Travis n.d.:6, 7, 12, 20).

Opinions of Lewis ranged from the adoration of some of his followers, who regarded him as an altruistic prophet, to the denunciation of *Sunset*'s Walter Woehlke, who published a six-part investigative report on Lewis's business career (Woehlke 1925, 1926). One early resident of the colony typified the idealization of Lewis by his supporters. She described his "pilgrimage" to locate a site for "the dream city" (Travis n.d.:4) and in the same spirit, translated "Atascadero" as "Many Waters" (Travis n.d.:4). It also can be translated as "muddy, miry, a mudhole."

Woehlke, referring to Lewis as "the champion borrower of them all," fulminated:

> For more than twenty years he has been selling stock, memberships, certificates, production contracts, personal notes, real estate, life subscriptions and other evidences of ownership or indebtedness. He has launched scores of enterprises freighted with high hopes and conditioned promises. One after the other they went broke, vanished, evaporated into thin air....The hold of E.G. Lewis on the purse strings of several thousand adherents is at first glance a psychological mystery...How does he do it? What kind of tune does he play on the pipe that charms the endless procession of dollars out of the pockets of their owners?...In the first place, let us state that most of these creditors, some ten thousand of them, are the salt of the earth, part of the great middle class, hard working, thrifty, industrious men and women, so honest, so guileless that they can't imagine anyone would deliberately take their money from them. They are trustful and confiding because they themselves would not dream of obtaining a penny by misrepresentation; being so transparently honest themselves, they attribute the same quality to any one who gains their confidence.
>
> But they are not merely trustful, honest, industrious and thrifty; most of them also are sincerely religious and possess a wide streak of idealism. That streak is the principal cause of their financial undoing. Into this vulnerable spot E.G. Lewis hurls the barbed harpoon of his glittering but vague promises and pulls it back laden with the coin of the realm....No enterprise, according to his letters and utterances, was ever a plain dollars-and-cents business proposition with him; he always indicated that he wanted to befriend the plain people and uplift humanity—and needed funds to do the heavy lifting (Woehlke 1925, 55 [6]:34-35).

Woehlke, however, could not fault Lewis for lack of enthusiasm or driving energy; both of these qualities were strongly evident in the early planning and development of Atascadero. Along with promoting the colony, building in the urban core, and overseeing subdivision in the rural areas, Lewis purchased what is now Atascadero State Beach. In 1916, he began construction of "Butterfly Drive" from Atascadero's civic center to the beach; a hotel and cottages were built on the coastal property in 1919 (Travis n.d.:22, 51; Atascadero Press 1923:20-21, 54-55). Soon after 1920, Lewis invested $400,000 of colony funds in the Atascadero Fruit Exchange's cannery and cold storage plant (Atascadero Press 1923:32-33).

Three aspects of Lewis' operation doomed the Atascadero Colony as it was originally planned and promoted. One was Lewis' impetuous opportunism, his leaping "into new enterprises with a running jump, finding out after the somersault that it was a shallow morass and not a navigable lake he hopped into" (Woehlke 1925, 55 [5]:27). An example was Lewis' application for a government food supply contract. Prosperity had come during World War I to the farmers of Arroyo Grande, praised by Myron Angel in the 1880s for its fine bean fields. The United States Government contracted for vast quantities of dried navy beans, an easily shipped, nonrefrigerated staple, from the farms of Arroyo Grande and other quickly planted areas in southern San Luis Obispo County (Krieger 1988:72-73). Lewis applied for a government contract after building a small dehydrating plant at Atascadero in the summer of 1918, and running a few tests on local fruits and vegetables (Travis n.d.:49). The contract was awarded in October, less than a month before the Armistice, and called for "2250 tons of dehydrated vegetables, which meant the production of 45,000,000 pounds of fresh vegetables....It was estimated that filling of this contract in the time allowed would require an addition 300 feet wide by 100 feet long to the local plant and construction work was begun immediately;" the required vegetables had not yet been planted (Travis n.d.:49).

Second, Lewis and most of the colonists were extremely naive concerning all aspects of horticulture, although Atascadero's economy was to be based on fruit-growing. In an early promotional letter, Lewis advised a prospective buyer that a small orchard would yield "a good income from pears in the third year;" pear trees do not produce fruit in commercial quantities until their sixth or eighth year (Woehlke 1925, 55 [5]:27). Thomas Hunt, dean of the College of Agriculture at Berkeley, reported on his inspection of the Atascadero orchards:

> The average holding was entirely too small to yield even a bare living; intensive cultivation was not possible because no irrigation water was available; frost conditions were not well determined; the price asked for unirrigated young orchards in an unproven district was too high and imposed too great a handicap on the buyers (Woehlke 1925, 55 [5]:27).

Third, Lewis speculated and spent heavily with borrowed money. He was declared bankrupt in December, 1924:

> He had been unable to pay the interest on a $750,000 loan on the Atascadero land for more than a year; the Atascadero Beach property, mortgaged for a quarter-million, was in the same condition. Taxes had not been paid for more than a year; the unsold orchard tracts were neglected; salaries were in arrears; Atascadero's population was dwindling; drouth wiped out the bulk of the small potential fruit crops (Woehlke 1926, 56 [1]:46).

Atascadero was still being promoted in 1926, however, as "a home community" (Western Publishers 1926). Permanent legacies of the colony include: the town and surrounding community of Atascadero; the colony's ornate administration building, now used as a civic center; and Butterfly Drive, the basis of modern Highway 41 from Highway 101 to Morro Bay.

New Roads

Butterfly Drive, cut as a private road, improved by San Luis Obispo County, then developed as a state highway, typified California's response to drivers' demands for more and better roads.

By the beginning of World War I, automobiles in California were rapidly replacing the horse and buggy. In 1915, the old stage route over Cuesta Pass was replaced by a two-lane, seventy-one-curve road along the Cuesta's east side. The roadbed was allowed to settle for seven years, then paved with concrete. The two lanes were realigned in 1937 for a four-lane expressway, and major work in 1968 further modified the curves of the original road (Miossi 1975:33; Nicholson 1989:89-90).

Camp Roberts

Two months after the passage of the Selective Service Act in September 1940, construction began near San Miguel on Camp Roberts, "the largest military training reservation in the United States during World War II," where 436,000 men were trained (Davis and Gates 1991:2). San Miguel and Paso Robles were overwhelmed in the attempt to provide facilities and supplies for military personnel and their families.

The camp closed as an Army base in 1946 and now serves as a training facility for the National Guard. The area was described in 1981 as reverting in part to:

> ...something approaching its original ecological state. The tule elk (brought in to enlarge the herd), mountain lions, bobcats, deer, and endangered species like the kit fox and the bald eagle call the camp home. So do some sheep grazing there (Gates 1981:26).

The Northeastern County Today

Both the Cholame Ranch and the Santa Margarita changed ownership in the 1960s. Howard Jack sold Cholame to the Hearst Corporation in 1966 (Nicholson 1973:21). William Reis willed the Santa Margarita to Stanford University in 1967; the university sold it in 1975 to Santa Margarita Limited (Kathy Loftus, personal communication, 1994). Some cattle ranching continues at Santa Margarita and Cholame.

The towns of Santa Margarita, Templeton, and San Miguel have stayed small; Shandon and Creston are tiny settlements; and Cholame is a stop along the highway. Widespread housing around Atascadero, however, seems to justify E. G. Lewis's most extravagant claims for the desirability of residence in this area. Paso Robles is burgeoning, and housing, vineyards, and five and ten acre "ranchettes" now extend east from the town.

Further east, along much of the northeastern line of the canal, Highways 41 and 46 follow the routes of precontact foot trails or historic wagon roads which have connected the coast and the San Joaquin Valley for generations. These highways take travelers through lands used now as they have been since mission times, for cattle grazing and fields of grain.

HISTORIC OVERVIEW: SOUTH OF CUESTA PASS

Portola's expedition of 1769 crossed what is now western San Luis Obispo County. Among the explorers' campsites were those in present-day Pismo Dunes, Price Canyon, and Los Osos Valley, named by the travelers for "troops of bears" (Boneu Companys 1983:200-205). The expedition encountered only small groups of native people in what is now the southern county (see Ethnography, Northern Chumash), but found these people friendly and helpful.

Pedro Fages, who had traveled with the expedition, brought a company of soldiers back to Los Osos Valley in the spring of 1772 to hunt bears. Missions San Carlos and San Antonio had little food, and "the hunters were enabled to send twenty-five loads, or about 9,000 pounds of bear meat...besides wild seeds purchased from the savages" (Engelhardt 1933:13-14). One deciding factor in the establishment of Mission San Luis Obispo in the fall of 1772 was "the good reports the soldiers made, who had taken part in the slaughter of the bears, regarding the docility of the gentiles in the rancherias of Bear Valley and its surrounding country" (Engelhardt 1933:15).

Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa

Father Junipero Serra, Pedro Fages, and their company arrived at Los Osos Valley in late August, 1772, and selected a nearby site for Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa. On September 1, Father Serra consecrated the mission with its first Mass; he left with Fages and his group the following day, en route to San Diego. Father Jose Cavaller "received all the vestments and church goods, the furniture for the house, and the implements for the field belonging to said Mission" (Engelhardt 1933:15-16).

The Spaniards' trust in the people of the area as friendly and provident is evident in both the small group left at the mission and in their extremely limited supplies. Father Cavaller was assigned five soldiers and "two Lower California neophytes in order that they might begin to build the dwelling and the chapel." The total amount of food left for these eight persons was "fifty pounds of flour, three pecks of wheat for sowing, a quantity of chocolate, and a box of brown sugar for which latter they might obtain wild seeds from the gentiles" (Engelhardt 1933:16). The local people brought "little presents of venison and wild seeds" to the mission, for which Father Cavaller traded beads or sugar. The father was described as "well satisfied with the Indians, who indeed are very affable and kindly, otherwise the Mission could not have continued" (Engelhardt 1933:17, 19).

Despite their helpfulness, the people of the area showed little interest in becoming neophytes at Mission San Luis Obispo. At the end of October, 1773, over a year after the mission's founding, "only twelve children had been baptized," and a few adults were being instructed. The Church fathers recognized that "these roving Indians," who moved across the land as they hunted, fished, or gathered plant foods, were averse to a sedentary life (Palou, quoted in Engelhardt 1933:22).

By the close of 1776, converts at San Luis Obispo numbered 194 (Englehardt 1933:157), and the routine of mission life had been set (see Ethnography, Southern Salinan). Father Pedro Font, traveling north in March of that year, noted that marriageable girls slept in a locked dormitory and were taught "to sew and to be tidy" (Bolton 1930, IV:270).

As at other missions, most of the male neophytes' work at San Luis Obispo was agricultural. In October, 1773, the mission's livestock totaled 71 animals: 41 cattle, four mares, one stud, four tame horses, two riding mules, 14 pack mules, and five pigs (Palou, quoted in Englehardt 1933:23). During 1818, its peak year for both livestock and crops, the mission owned 18,978 animals: 8900 cattle, 8640 sheep, 110 pigs, 1025 horses, and 303 mules (Engelhardt 1933:159). In the same year, San Luis Obispo's converts harvested 4000 bushels of wheat and 7205 of peas (Engelhardt 1933:158). The vast acreage utilized for farming and grazing extended northeast from the mission to Rancho Santa Margarita, west to Rancho San Miguelito (the area around present-day Avila), and south of what is now Arroyo Grande.

Ironically, as the mission's agriculture flourished, its neophyte population was declining rapidly. From a height of 961 in 1805, the number of converts had sunk to 546 in 1818 (Engelhardt 1933:157). Despite the recruitment, sometimes forced, of Yokuts people (see Ethnography, Yokuts), San Luis Obispo's population continued to decline, mainly as the result of introduced diseases. By 1832, only 231 converts remained at the mission (Engelhardt 1933:157).

With the secularization decree of 1834, most of San Luis Obispo's lands, like those of the other missions, were dispersed in grants to Mexican citizens. The mission buildings were sold in 1845 (Engelhardt 1933:148). In August, 1850:

> The mission buildings were regarded as belonging to the public, and one of the rooms opening on the corridor was used as a court-room, another as a jail, and others for various offices, the chapel and adjoining rooms being in the possession of the priest....The principal part of the buildings, however, were claimed as the property of Capt. John Wilson, who, with his partner, Scott, and others, had become the purchaser...(Angel 1883:132).

The mission buildings and adjoining land were returned to the Church by the United States in 1859 (Dart 1978:25).

The Ranchos

The Branch Canal passes through and near much of the land granted to native and naturalized Mexican citizens in what is now San Luis Obispo County. Among the first to settle was Francis Ziba Branch, one of four early Anglo-American pioneers in the county who had essentially become Californios, adopting Mexican citizenship, marrying women from prominent Mexican families, and acquiring vast ranchos (Fig. 6).

Santa Manuela

Branch, who had arrived in California in 1831 with William Wolfskill's trapping expedition, "opened a store and boarding house in Santa Barbara" and in 1835 married Manuela Carlon (Bancroft 1886, II:727). He was granted the 17,000-acre Santa Manuela Rancho—named for his wife— in 1837 and established his home there in that year (Angel 1883:117). Seferino Carlon, Branch's father-in-law, deeded the Arroyo Grande Rancho, comprising 4400 acres, to his daughter and Branch in 1843 (Cowan 1977:16; Nicholson 1980:11-12).

When Branch settled on the Santa Manuela, "the region was almost a complete wilderness....The

valley of the Arroyo lay in front of his home, but it was a thicket of swamp and willow and cottonwood, a *monte* as it was called...." (Angel 1883:217). William Hutton, who surveyed the ranch in 1851, noted that the survey "was a pretty rough job." He described both a bear hunt and the pursuit of Indians from the Tulare Valley who had raided Branch's horse corral (Hutton 1942:59-62).

Drawing of the Rancho Manuela in 1851 by William Rich Hutton. Courtesy of the Huntington Library.

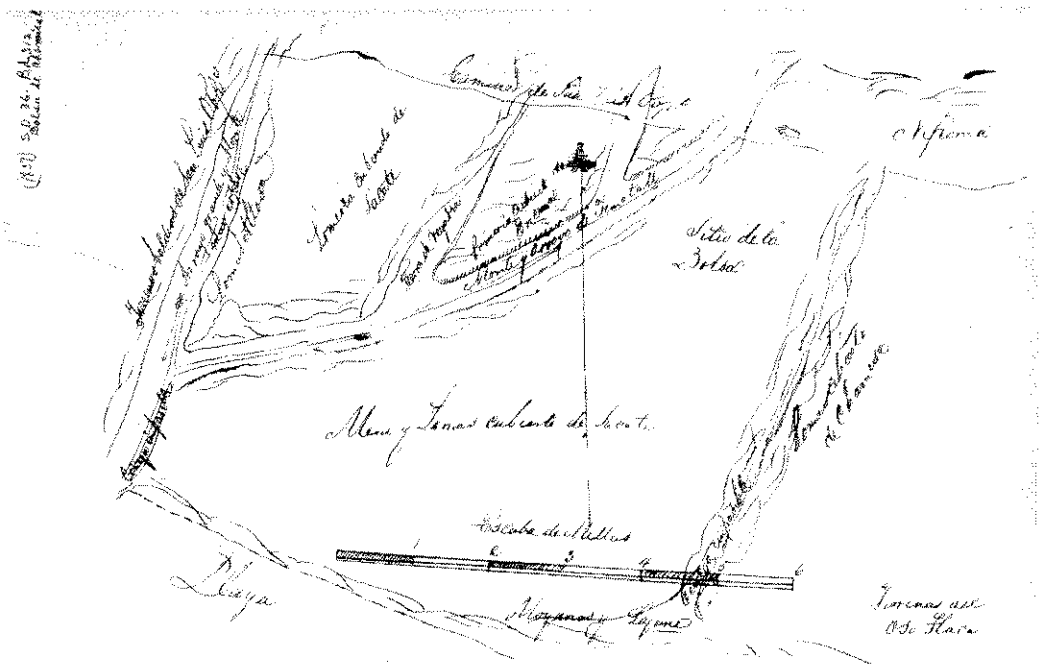
Despite the wilderness, Branch followed Californio ranchero tradition in building a large, comfortable adobe home, where he and Manuela raised their ten children (Angel 1883:217-218; Ditmas 1983:208, 296). As was typical for Californios, Branch's wealth came from livestock. He also planted grain on part of his land, and established the south county's first gristmill, which "ground the wheat from the southern ranchos" (Angel 1883:223-224). William Streeter, a justice of the peace in San Luis Obispo County in 1852 (below), recalled:

> In 1854 and 1855 I assisted in putting up the sawmill and gristmill for Zeba Branch, on his ranch, in the Arroyo Grande. After the millwrights had left I remodeled the greater part of the machinery and started it running (Streeter 1939:256).

Branch acquired the Huer Huero Rancho in late 1847. San Luis Obispo County's assessment rolls for 1851 show him as owner of 30,173 acres (Angel 1883:168). He sold the Huer Huero in 1856, but bought the Rancho Bolsa de Chamisal in the same year (Nicholson 1980:13, 17). "A careful and active business man," Branch by 1860 owned the Santa Manuela, the Arroyo Grande, and parts of the Bolsa de Chamisal, the Corral de Piedra, and the Pismo; on this large acreage he pastured "vast herds of cattle and horses" (Angel 1883:173, 219).

Bolsa de Chamisal

The Bolsa de Chamisal, a ranch of 14,335 acres lying southwest of Santa Manuela , was granted to Francisco Quijada in 1837; he was running horses and cattle there by 1839 (Nicholson 1980:12-13). In March, 1843, however, half ownership of the rancho is shown for Lewis, or Don Louis, Burton (Spanish Archives, Expediente 513). Not long after the division of the Bolsa de Chamisal, Quijada died, and his heirs sold the remainder of the ranch to Burton (Nicholson 1980:13).



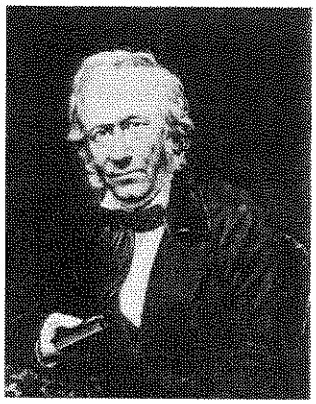
Diseño of the Bolsa de Chamisal

Lewis Burton, like Branch, had come to California as a member of the Wolfskill expedition, settled in Santa Barbara, and taken Mexican citizenship. In 1836 he was "in business with Branch" at Santa Barbara (Bancroft 1885, II:738). Unlike Branch, he did not move north, and held offices in both Santa Barbara city and county governments when statehood was established (Guinn 1902:159, 163). Burton sold the Bolsa de Chamisal to Branch in 1856.

Pismo

Branch bought a portion of the Pismo Rancho in 1853 from Isaac Sparks, who had also arrived in California with a trapping expedition, that of Ewing Young in 1832. Sparks made money as an otter hunter, established a store in Santa Barbara, and became a Mexican citizen in 1837 (Bancroft 1886, V:729). He was granted the Huasna Rancho in 1843, and acquired the Pismo Rancho in 1846 (Cowan 1977:40; Nicholson 1980:15). Jose Ortega, grantee of the Pismo, traded to Sparks "the land with house, corrals and fences for 430 head of `black cattle, small and large' and $375 in goods [from Sparks' store] whenever he wished them" (Nicholson 1980:15). Like Lewis Burton, Sparks was elected in 1850 to the first city council of Santa Barbara, where he maintained his business interests. Later, he built a home on the Huasna and "led the life of a prosperous ranchero" there (Bancroft 1886, V:729; Guinn 1902:163).

In 1853 Sparks also sold a large piece of the Pismo Rancho to John Price, another of San Luis Obispo County's Anglo-American Californios (Nicholson 1980:16). Historian Myron Angel noted Price as "one of those whom fate in its waywardness snatched from misfortune and distress and cast, apparently helpless and deserted, upon this peaceful shore, where wealth and honors and happiness were to reward his future efforts" (Angel 1883:63). Price, a young English sailor, jumped ship in Mexico in 1828, and arrived in California in 1830. He worked on ranches around Monterey and the Salinas Valley until 1837, when he moved to San Luis Obispo County and took a job as a vaquero on Dana's Nipomo Rancho (Angel 1883:63-64). Price acquired cattle and horses of his own, and worked as a majordomo for Sparks on the Huasna. In 1844, he married Andrea Carlon, sister-in-law of Francis Branch, and they raised their large family on the Pismo (Angel 1883:67, 69).



William Dana

Nipomo

William Dana was granted the 37,888-acre Nipomo Rancho in 1837, the year that Branch received the Santa Manuela, but Dana waited until 1839 to settle. A ship's captain from Boston, Dana arrived in Santa Barbara in 1825 and set up a store, but "continued in command of the *Waverley*, continuing the circle of voyages on the Pacific to Canton, Sitka, the islands, California ports, and elsewhere" (Angel 1883:102). By 1828 he resided in Santa Barbara; he applied there for Mexican citizenship in January of that year and married Maria Josefa Carrillo in August (Angel 1883:103-104).

Once on the Nipomo, Dana "erected a large adobe house of thirteen rooms" and "heavily engaged in stock raising, farming, and manufacturing." Manufactures on the rancho included cloth, soap, furniture, and agricultural implements (Angel 1883:104, 105). Dana and his family were noted for their hospitality:

> In the period of the ranchero days, when the great landholders were the lords of the country and the *patrone* of all the people, this was the headquarters of the region and the stopping-place of all travelers, where hospitality was unbounded. In nearly all the books upon California in the early days, in Government reports and orders, frequent mention is made of Captain Dana, his pleasant home, and his hospitality....At that time it was customary to provide travelers with meals, lodging, and a relay of horses free of charge, and, if unacquainted with the country, a guide was sent to accompany them to the next place. All this was without charge, and at times, it is said, if the traveler was thought to be in need, money would be placed near his bed that he might supply himself without the indelicacy of asking his condition or openly making the tender of a gift. Such was the hospitality of the Californians, of which the rancho of Captain Dana was a conspicuous example, known and availed of by all travelers (Angel 1883:104-105).

William Hutton, who surveyed the ranch in 1850, described Dana as "an excellent, good-natured old gentleman," adding that "they have treated me very kindly, and they live very comfortably." In a classic image of early California, Hutton wrote "The air is filled with the fragrance of the different species of clover, and in some places the oats are 4 feet high" (Hutton 1942:43).

Dana died in 1858. He and Maria Josefa had twenty-one children, of whom twelve were still living in 1882, when the Nipomo was divided (Angel 1883:106, 107; Dana 1969:40).

Potrero de San Luis Obispo

In the interconnected world of the early county, two Dana sons married daughters of the grantee of Rancho Potrero de San Luis Obispo, north of the mission (Dana 1969:35). Maria Concepcion Boronda, born to a presidial family in Monterey, married a French settler, Olivier Deleissigues (or de Leyssegues), around 1838 (Bancroft 1886,II:724, 778; Olsen 1976:25). She was granted the 3,506-acre Potrero in 1842; the Deleissigues family moved to the ranch in 1847 (Olsen 1976:25).

Deleissigues died in 1849. In January, 1851, the County Court of Sessions "directed that 'the widow of the late Olivie [*sic*] Deleissigues, *nacio* Concepcion Boronda, be written to that she may have her land, called the potrero, measured and surveyed, as the spare ground is sought as settlement, and cannot be occupied until the said farm be measured to know its boundary'"(quoted in Angel 1883:133).

In the early 1850s Maria Concepcion married Jose Maria Munoz, a Mexican artillery officer who later (1857-1861) served as county judge (Angel 1883:290; Olsen 1976:25). Munoz and Maria Concepcion "traded a part of the Potrero Rancho to Pedro Quintana in exchange for two houses and some acreage" near the town of San Luis Obispo (Olsen 1976:25). The family settled in one of the houses, an adobe called "La Loma" (Dana 1970:17; Olsen 1976:25).

"Munoz was stepfather to the five Deleissegues [sic] children and father of four more born to himself and Maria Concepcion..." (Curry 1974:25). After his death in 1874, Maria Concepcion continued to live at La Loma. Justina Deleissigues had married Frank Dana in 1873; Manuela Munoz wed Fred Dana in 1875 (Dana 1969:35). In the late 1880s or early 1890s Maria Concepcion sold the house, which is now known as the Bowden adobe, "and went to live with her children in Nipomo" (Olsen 1976:25).

Corral de Piedra

South of the mission, the Corral de Piedra Rancho, like the Potrero de San Luis Obispo, was granted to a member of Monterey's military colony. Jose Maria Villavicencio was a captain in the militia there, and active across early California (Bancroft 1886, V:763). In 1841, he was granted 2 square leagues of the Corral de Piedra, with an augmentation of 5 leagues in 1846, for a total of 30,911 acres (Dart 1978:25). Villavicencio, or Villa, may have followed his brother, Rafael, to what is now San Luis Obispo County. Rafael was granted the Rancho San Geronimo, near Cayucos, in 1842, but he had begun building there in 1839 (Bancroft Library 1852, Land Case 61 SD:8; Agnew and Agnew 1990:4-5).

Jose Maria Villa built a house on the Corral de Piedra in 1841, began cultivating, and brought in cattle (Nicholson 1980:13). Several of Villa's children "built their homes and worked portions of the land," and by the 1860s much of the Corral de Piedra was divided among the children, relatives of Villa's wife, Rafaela Rodriguez, and outside buyers (Nicholson 1980:14). As noted above, one of the purchasers was Francis Branch. In 1866, Branch and other owners sold large areas of the Corral de Piedra to the Steele brothers, who established the dairy industry in San Luis Obispo County.

Ramona Carrillo de Pacheco

Cañada del Chorro
Cañada de los Osos y Pecho y Islay

In December, 1850, William Hutton wrote: "I have surveyed, for Wilson, the farm and garden of the Chorro (a beautiful place for a garden and dairy), and two others adjoining it..." (Hutton 1942:53). John Wilson, friend, brother-in-law, and occasionally business partner of William Dana, was a Scottish ship's captain, immortalized for his skills as a seaman in Richard Dana's *Two Years Before the Mast.* He first arrived in California for the hide-and-tallow trade in 1826, married Ramona Carrillo de Pacheco, sister of Maria Josefa Carrillo de Dana, in 1836, and became a Mexican citizen in 1837 (Angel 1883:167; Bancroft 1886, V:777; Dana 1969:383).

The Ranchos Canada del Chorro, 3167 acres, and Canada de los Osos y Pecho y Islay, 32,430 acres, northwest and west of Mission San Luis Obispo, were granted to Wilson and his partner, James Scott, in 1845 (Dart 1978:25). Rancho Suey, comprising a massive 48,835 acres, had been granted to Ramona Carrillo in 1837 (Dart 1978:25). The 1851 assessment roll shows Wilson as the largest landholder in San Luis Obispo County (Angel 1883:168).

Visiting Los Osos y Pecho y Islay in the spring of 1861, William Brewer noted that "Mr. Wilson has several ranches together, about 80,000 to 100,000 acres, keeps 20,000 head of cattle, 1,000 or 1,500 horses, etc., living in patriarchal style, monarch of all he surveys" (Brewer 1966:87). Wilson died later that year (Dart 1978:36).

Cuesta de San Luis Obispo

The Cuesta de San Luis Obispo Rancho, occupying much of the flat land now traversed by Highway 101 along the Cuesta Grade, was claimed by Jose Mariano Bonilla in 1842 (Bonilla and Bonilla 1976:111). He was granted Rancho Huer Huero, where he had already settled, in the same year, but left to serve as the administrator and *Juez de Paz* at Mission San Luis Obispo.

In 1850, Bonilla was elected the first judge of San Luis Obispo County; he later served several terms as a member of the County Board of Supervisors (Angel 1883:131, 151, 169, 284; Bancroft 1886, II:724). Cuesta Ranch appears in early records; a regulation passed in 1851 states:

> Ordered that it shall be the duty of the Judge of the Plains of San Luis Obispo to accompany every drove of cattle passing through the township of San Luis Obispo, as far as the rancho of M. Bonilla, and ascertain if there be any cattle in such for which the drover has no bill of sale (quoted in Angel 1883:134).

In the 1859 ranking of ranchos for assessment, the Cuesta was listed as third-class (Angel 1883:173).

Bonilla's claim to Cuesta Ranch was confirmed neither by the United States Land Commission nor by later court review (Miossi 1975:34). He retained some land, however, near the foot of

Cuesta Grade, and built an early-day grist mill, diverting water from San Luis Creek with an aqueduct. Cuesta Flouring Mill "consisted of a water wheel about twelve feet in diameter and a serrated flint grinding stone;" it produced 25 barrels of flour a day (Miossi 1975:34-35). The mill "received 'grists' from El Chorro, Potrero de San Luis Obispo, Villa, San Bernardo, Morro, Cayucos, San Luisito, Santa Rosa, San Geronimo, Santa Margarita, and Piedra Blanca Ranchos, also from the Estrella and Paso Robles, some farmers bringing their grain a distance of forty miles" (Angel 1883:224).

In 1866, Bonilla sold a half section of land, including the mill, to S. Sumner, who was listed as operating it in 1874 (Angel 1883:224; Miossi 1975:35). Bonilla, who also retired from public service in 1866, may have moved from the Cuesta area to San Luis Obispo about this time. His house was located south of the mill; Joaquin Estrada established his home on this land before 1870 (Angel 1883:284; Miossi 1975:35).

The Californio County: 1850-1865

John Price as a young man. From the Archives of the San Luis Obispo County Historical Society.

The recognition of California as a state in September, 1850, brought little immediate change to San Luis Obispo County. Lacking the port of Monterey or, later, of Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo remained more isolated that its neighbors to the north and south, and the county retained its Californio lifeways for a longer time.

The four Anglo-American Californios—Branch, Price, Dana, and Wilson—all took part in the government of the newly established county (Angel 1883:131, 133). In the fall of 1850, John Price, for example, with as much ease as he had become Juan Miguel Price, Alcalde of San Luis Obispo, became John Michael Price, County Judge (Angel 1883:68-69, 133). The influence of Spain and Mexico, however, continued in the judicial process. Angel (1883:131) reported that "The proceedings of the court and all accounts were for some years conducted in Spanish, that being the only language spoken by the great majority of the people, and the officers and juries of the courts."

Samuel Pollard, one of the earliest merchants in San Luis Obispo, was elected County Recorder in 1850, and described his role in the city's first criminal trial:

> In the summer of 1850 a party of Texan cow-boys, driving a band of cattle to San Francisco, passed through the rancho of Mr. J. M. Price....when he was informed

> that some cattle of his brand had been seen in a drove on the road, he posted off to town, and with the Sheriff and a posse, came unexpectedly upon the drovers and they were arrested. The county of San Luis Obispo had just been organized. There were not more than three or four persons in the town who had ever been in an American court-room....The County Recorder was merchant, Postmaster, Deputy Treasurer, and now was called upon by the District Judge to display his legal ability as District Attorney. For, be it known, there was not a qualified lawyer in the county in those days—and the people were happy. There was only one other man in town, besides the Judge, and the man of many offices, who could read English.... Consequently, the first pleading before a court of law in this county was done by the aforementioned County-Recorder-Merchant-Postmaster-DeputyTreasurer-District Attorney. He had never opened a law book in his life. (Pollard, quoted in Angel 1883:285).

Joaquin Carrillo, appointed District Judge in 1852, was among the court officials "not familiar with the English language" (Angel 1883:285). David Newsom, who acted in 1853 as both County Clerk and Superintendent of San Luis Obispo's Public Schools, recalled translating for the judge. In 1854, when a school, which had opened in 1850 in one room of the old mission, needed a teacher, Newsom, like Pollard a man of many careers, took the job. Newsom was the first teacher to instruct in English, "requiring all to translate the lessons into both Spanish and English" (Angel 1883:256-257, 285).

Some of the county's early legislation reflected American civil structure, such as property taxation and the issuing of business licenses (Angel 1883:167, 169). Many of the first resolutions, however, were attempts to codify practices on the Californio ranchos, as the flood of Gold Rush immigrants dramatically increased the price of cattle.

In 1850, Samuel Pollard, in partnership with William Beebee, built San Luis Obispo's first store; he recalled "the good old days of the 50s":

> Everyone had plenty of money even to the Indian vaquero, as the country was full of cattle, sheep, and horses, and it was...from the coast counties that the miners were supplied with them....So, we thought this a good place for a store.... Calicos costing 12 1/2 cents per yard in San Francisco sold for cash at 50 cents; sheeting was the same; coffee was 50 cents per pound, etc....(Pollard 1972:30).

The store's merchandise came by ship and was "landed in surf boats," which could be turned over by waves near the shore (Pollard 1972:30). Passengers were also brought in through the surf. Walter Murray, who became the first editor of the *San Luis Obispo Tribune* and a District Judge, described his arrival at Avila Beach in 1853:

> ...we were landed upon the beach from the boat of the steamer *Sea Bird*, ourself and another person being the only passengers on the steamer's fortnightly trip. The purser handed us the great United States mail which we had no difficulty in concealing in our pocket. Not a pound of freight was landed. Luckily the sea was not very rough, and we therefore did not get wet, but on landing, at the extremity of a long stretch of sea-beach, not a soul was to be seen, nor any sign of habitation, save a house in the distance....(Murray, quoted in Angel 1883:324).

Despite the prosperity which Pollard recorded for San Luis Obispo County in the 1850s, the county remained isolated, difficult of access not only by sea but by land. A correspondent for the *Alta California* in 1856 described the route through Cuesta Pass:

> The road to San Luis follows down the gorge parallel with a beautiful stream of water....It is extremely tortuous, and difficult for wheel conveyances, crossing the stream almost every quarter or half mile, descending one bank and climbing the other in a reckless manner, calculated to perplex and annoy, if not to entirely confound the luckless teamster (*Alta California*, May 26, 1856:1).

In the spring of 1850, William Hutton, after a carriage ride from San Luis Obispo to Price's place on the Pismo, had written that "We passed, with much difficulty (on account of gullies), over a beautiful country..." Hutton went on to Nipomo, "after crossing the 'arroyo grande,' a very miry, half-bridged stream, and going up a hill [we] thought we could not get up..." (Hutton 1942:42-43).

It seems probable that William Brewer, travelling north in April, 1861, with his crew and a wagon load of equipment for the United States Geological Survey, encountered the same treacherous hill:

> After leaving Santa Barbara County the roads were again horrible--no road in fact, but a mere trail, like a cow path, hardly marked by the track of wheels, and often very obscure....We wound among hills, and at last at the Arroyo Grande, had a bad hill to descend. We had come a longer road because the "hill was easier" this way. Well, we got to the "easy" hill. It was about five or six hundred feet high, the sides at an angle of about thirty degrees, down which the road ran in "crooks"--now one side up, now the other....We chained both hind wheels, and for a time all went well. We had descended about one-third of the way, sliding, slipping, dragging, when, quick as a flash, over went the whole concern....Such a pile! The wagon caught when completely upside down, the wheels high in the air.
>
> I had the curiosity to go back to the hill the next day, when we packed down on our backs part of the baggage, the wagon top, etc., and measured the angle. In one place for some distance the road descended at *an angle of twenty-nine degrees*! Yet this is the "better" road to San Luis Obispo (Brewer 1974:79-81).

Once arrived at San Luis Obispo, various nineteenth-century travelers recorded their disappointment in the size and activity of the town, although new buildings had been constructed and several businesses established. Pollard and Beebee built an adobe for their enterprise, Pollard noting many years later that in the inflationary economy of California in 1850, "The Mexican architect who planned and laid the adobe of our store got $16 per day in gold, more than our superior judge now receives, and the mud professor who made and toted mud got $5 a day. So, each adobe in the building cost about $1.00...."(Pollard 1972:31). The same year, William Dana constructed a frame building, the first for both the town and the county, followed soon by a two-story wooden structure put up by John Wilson, "the material ready for putting up being brought around Cape Horn" (Angel 1883:355).

In 1851, Dana built the Casa Grande, San Luis Obispo's first hotel. The Casa Grande seems symbolic of its time in that the building was a hybrid of local and Yankee materials:

> The walls were of adobe and the roof of sheet iron. The timbers used in it were hauled from Santa Rosa Creek by oxen, and the flooring and doors were brought from the Atlantic Coast (Angel 1883:355).

In 1854, however, the *Alta California*'s correspondent dismissed San Luis Obispo as "very nearly the smallest and 'loafingest' country town throughout the State....It can boast of only a dozen or twenty houses of any importance, and is constantly surrounded by an impenetrable haze of idleness and stagnancy...."(*Alta California*, February 7, 1854:1). The paper's correspondent in 1856 remarked more charitably that the county was a "very poorly appreciated section of country," and that the town "probably does not contain two hundred inhabitants, all told, but has no rival in population for a distance of 145 miles northward or 120 miles southward" (*Alta California*, May 26, 1856:1). Arriving in San Luis Obispo in April, 1861, Brewer commented that the town lay "in a beautiful, green, grassy valley," and looked "more South American or Spanish than even the others we have seen." He added, "It is a small, miserable place" (Brewer 1974:83).

Brewer, like many Americans arriving in California during the early days of statehood, wanted to see increased American settlement on the land and had no patience with the vast Californio holdings; in San Luis Obispo he grumbled about "ranches so large that they are never spoken of by the *acre*, but always by the *square league*" (Brewer 1974:89). Within four years of Brewer's visit, however, the time of the great stock ranches south of Cuesta Pass had come to an end.

Flooding in the winter of 1861-1862 was followed by the terrible drought of 1863-1864, when ranchers, already hard hit by the low prices of a glutted market (see American Settlement, North of Cuesta Pass), lost cattle by the thousands (Cleland 1975:111, 130-131, 134-135). Francis Branch, shown on the assessment rolls of 1860 as the wealthiest man in the county, lost most of his fortune to the drought. "In the beginning of 1863 his herds numbered over 20,000 head of large cattle, and before the close of 1864 he could gather but 800 alive" (Angel 1883: 173, 219).

Edgar Steele, who with his brothers established the dairy industry in San Luis Obispo County, wrote of the drought's aftermath:

> Most of the grant holders had no means left and were discouraged, did not know how they could pay even taxes, and in San Luis and Santa Barbara, indeed in all of the southern counties, offered their lands for sale. Some of the best of the ranches were sold at 25 and 50 cents per acre. These sales and advertisements of ranches for sale attracted the attention of stock raisers and dairymen and later on of farmers and homeseekers.... (Steele 1894:28).

The long-horned cattle that had provided hides and tallow for the Mission trade and beef for the Gold Rush market were soon replaced in much of San Luis Obispo County by the dairy cow.

Change, Growth, Diversity: 1865-1900

Among the first land grants to be sold following the drought was the Wilsons' Cañada del Chorro. Joseph Hollister purchased the ranch for sheep pasture in 1865 (Krieger 1988:66). The following year, Edgar Steele, with his brothers George and Isaac, began the purchase of contiguous parcels from four ranchos: Branch's Arroyo Grande and Bolsa de Chamisal, the Corral de Piedra (in multiple ownership by 1866), and Price's Pismo (Angel 1883:n.p.;

Nicholson 1980:11-16). The Steeles, who were successful dairymen in Marin and Sonoma Counties, acquired about 45,000 acres.

> They stocked the ranchos with 600 cows, employed 100 men, and during the first five years expended $20,000 a year in improvements, building fences, dairy houses,etc. As it was necessary to raise feed for their cattle, some of their land was devoted to farming...(Angel 1883:n.p.).

A major change on the land was the construction of "some fifty or sixty miles of board fence." Adding to their cows "by every possible means," the Steeles by 1870 had the second largest dairy herd in the state (*San Francisco Commercial Herald*, February, 1870, quoted in Angel 1883:226-227). By 1883, the Steeles' dairies, whose chief product was cheese, were "classed as making the largest amount of cheese of any firm in the world" (Angel 1883:227).

Describing the effect of the Steele Brothers' enterprise on San Luis Obispo County, Myron Angel wrote, "The county was distant from the great markets by land, and it had previously been argued that only cattle could be produced with profit, as they could furnish their own transportation;" the Steeles, however, had been able to ship their cheese "at favorable opportunities" (Angel 1883:223). As the area's population grew, waiting for opportunities to ship or receive goods became more frustrating. In 1869 John Harford, the manager of a lumber business, in partnership with the Goldtree Brothers and Abraham Blochman and Company, San Luis Obispo merchants, constructed the People's Wharf at what is now Avila (Angel 1883:324; Nicholson 1989:112-113). Walter Murray, recalling his surf-boat arrival here in 1853, exulted:

> To-day we find, near the spot of our landing, a splendid new wharf, 620 feet long, with a depth of water sufficient to accommodate any of our ordinary coast vessels; two schooners at anchor, one at the wharf, the other ready to haul up and discharge cargo. Two warehouses, one forty by fifty feet, the other twenty by fifty in dimensions, with the immediate prospect of a third, of still larger proportions, being built....(Murray, quoted in Angel 1883:324).

Overland travel to San Luis Obispo was also becoming easier, as California stagecoach companies built roads and provided more frequent service.

The south county's first town was "situated on the north branch of the creek on the stage road leading from San Luis Obispo to Santa Barbara." Arroyo Grande "was brought into existence about 1867, by the building of a school house and blacksmith shop" (Newsom, quoted in Angel 1883:351). Its post office, the first in the south county, was established January 15, 1869 (Frickstad 1955:n.p.).

Although settlers were moving into the Arroyo Grande Valley, the area at this time remained a pioneer frontier. Edwin Markham, poet and teacher, graduated from the State Normal School in San Jose in 1872, and accepted an offer from parents in the upper valley to teach their children. When he arrived to start work, he found that the families who hired him had not yet built a schoolhouse. Writing to Historian Annie Morrison many years later, Markham recalled that he borrowed an axe, and:

> I went into the woods, selected a fine live-oak, one with broad, friendly branches, all woven so thick that no rain could penetrate the leafy roof. Now cutting down

> some young saplings, I built a rail fence around my chosen tree. Next I set up in the enclosure short sections of a tree-trunk, for seats and desks for my nine pupils. Finally I erected a high platform next the tree....This was my Oak-tree College....I have ruled over many schools in buildings that were beautiful and ornate; but never have I elsewhere felt the deep satisfaction, felt the lyric happiness I knew in that green kingdom on the hills, in my airy Live-oak College of San Luis Obispo (Markham, quoted in Morrison and Haydon 1917:114; Ditmas 1983:259-260).

In contrast, the town of San Luis Obispo in 1868, "after near a century of existence as a place of civilization, and more than twenty years after the American occupation, at last had established in its midst that indispensable concomitant of enlightened society and progress—the newspaper" (Angel 1883:271). The short-lived *San Luis Obispo Pioneer* appeared on January 4 and included an editorial urging the development of agriculture, particularly wheat growing, in the county. In February, the editor's remarks on the town of San Luis Obispo were highly reminiscent of those written by the *Alta California*'s correspondent in 1854:

> Erection of buildings: At no time has our town stood more in need of improvement by the erection of buildings of various kinds than at present. Although the county has actually doubled its population during the past three years, and the coming season promises to bring us a still larger immigration, the town of San Luis Obispo has improved but little. Some few dwelling houses have been built by parties who, in self-defense, were obliged to have shelter for the winter, but that is all....(*San Luis Obispo Pioneer*, February 1, 1868:2).

The "Special Traveling Correspondent of the *Alta*" agreed with the *Pioneer*'s editor, noting in August, 1868 that "little has been done in the way of repairing buildings," although there had been a "tendency for a year or more past of a large immigration hither" (*Alta California*, August 22, 1868:1). The correspondent commented indignantly on San Luis's "monumental folly," a jail which had cost $18,000,"a big sum for a poor little cow county like this. It is of brick (the only structure of such material in the place)...it may be likened to a porter's lodge or fancy dog kennel" (*Alta California*, August 22, 1868:1).

The reporter wrote more enthusiastically about the new water-powered grain mill being constructed on Chorro Creek by Pollard, Childs and Company, the "three or four thousand fine wool sheep" grazing on Joseph Hollister's ranch, the recently opened thermal springs establishment of David Newsom, the former County Recorder—Teacher—Superintendent of Schools, and the "neat- looking sheet" of the *Pioneer (Alta California*, August 22, 1868:1).

Until August, 1869, the *Pioneer* served as San Luis Obispo County's only newspaper; on August 7, the first issue of the *San Luis Obispo Tribune* appeared. When the *Pioneer* ceased publication in November, the *Tribune*'s staff printed the blunt statement that "The whole of the legitimate support of the present population of this county, without forcing matters, is barely sufficient to keep one good paper alive. Two cannot be sustained" (*San Luis Obispo Tribune*, December 4, 1869; Angel 1883:272). The county has since supported many newspapers, but the *Tribune* continues to be the area's major journal.

Construction began in December, 1869 on the Methodist Episcopal Church, the first Protestant church in San Luis Obispo; services were announced for January 2, 1870 in the unfinished

building. The pastor noted, "We have ordered the windows and doors, which will not cost to exceed fifty dollars, and at our first service we hope to raise this amount by collection" (Angel 1883:281).

Buildings of other Protestant denominations followed in the 1870s. The Jewish community, pioneered in San Luis Obispo in 1857 by merchant partners Nathan Goldtree and Morris Cohen, worshiped at home or, later, in public halls (*San Luis Obispo Tribune* 1894:88; Stern and Kramer 1973:14). The *Tribune* noted in 1870:

> The Hebrews of San Luis Obispo celebrated their New Year on Monday and Tuesday of this week. All their stores were closed, and it appeared as though the life of the town was gone....We were never so much impressed with the weight of this class of our fellow citizens....(*San Luis Obispo Tribune*, October 1, 1870:3).

Both the City and County of San Luis Obispo, by the late 1870s, included fellow citizens from a wide diversity of faiths and ethnic groups.

"Years of Greatest Initiative and Progress": the 1870s

An historian of San Luis Obispo County, writing in 1917, summarized the 1870s:

> Considering the history of the county in the seventy years of its existence, it would seem that the '70's were its most important years, its years of greatest initiative and progress. In those years systematic roadbuilding was begun; the sea-ports utilized; railroads constructed; many of the great ranchos divided and sold to settlers; the public school system organized; the county seat incorporated and the population of the county quadrupled....(Brooks 1917:200).

In 1873, John Harford sold his interest in the People's Wharf and, with new partners, began construction of the Railroad Wharf, in the lee of Point San Luis. A narrow-gauge railway, one of the first in California, was laid from the terrace along San Luis Creek to the end of the wharf; horse-drawn flat cars hauled the freight (Best 1964:13-15). When the new facility was inaugurated, the increased speed and volume of freight handling made Harford a local hero (Nicholson 1989:112). The harbor (now Port San Luis) was named Port Harford.

At Harford's suggestion, Ah Louis, who became a prominent businessman and a distinguished citizen of San Luis Obispo, contracted to provide Chinese laborers for construction of both the Railroad Wharf and the railway (Ochs 1970:25-26). His crews later contributed greatly to the transportation system that opened coastal San Luis Obispo County to development. They laid the track for the narrow-gauge railroads from Avila to San Luis Obispo, completed in 1876, and from San Luis Obispo to Los Olivos, in Santa Barbara County, constructed between 1881 and 1887 (Ochs 1970:32-33). Their roadbuilding included the county roads from Paso Robles to Cambria and through Cuesta Pass, in 1876-1877 (Ochs 1970:26).

Ah Louis opened a store in San Luis Obispo in 1874 to provide for his workmen and to serve as an office for labor contracts (Ochs 1970:26). His "Chinese Labor Agency and Store" advertised "all kinds of Chinese Provisions" and "Chinese Labor Contracted for on Short Notice" (*San Luis*

Obispo Tribune, November 13, 1875). Ah Louis prospered with his various businesses, which included San Luis Obispo's first brickyard (Ochs 1970:28; Nicholson 1989:115). The Ah Louis Store, which still stands on the corner of Palm and Chorro, was built of bricks from this yard in 1885. The *Tribune* commented that "The building is an ornament to that part of the city, as it would be to any part, and shows the proprietor to be an enterprising, competent businessman" (Ochs 1970:28; Nicholson 1971:32-33).

The respect given Ah Louis as a valued member of the community was, in varying degrees, extended to some of the county's Chinese residents, especially merchants and other businessmen, such as Sam Lee, whose "first class wash house" served San Luis Obispo for more than a generation (*The Holiday Tribune* 1882:22; Ochs 1970:23). Most of the Chinese work force, however, came to be seen as part of "the Chinese question" during America's economic downturns in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. In a special state election in 1879, the county's citizens voted 1,970 to 4 against continuing Chinese immigration (Angel 1883:162).

Despite their vote, the majority of residents recognized both the rights of the Chinese, once in the United States, and the large contribution made by Chinese workers to the county's economy. An anti-Chinese club formed in San Luis Obispo in late 1885, but when the club solicited customers in June, 1886 for a newly built "Caucasian Steam Laundry", this business failed. San Luis Obispo's citizens continued to patronize Chinese wash houses (Ochs 1970:22-23), and to hire Chinese workers at home. As farm and ranch hands, Chinese laborers contributed to the diversifying agriculture of the county. In Arroyo Grande beans were "cultivated with great success," and Chinese workers provided much of the essential hand labor. "No machinery is employed in gathering the crop...the labor of the harvest is severe, and is done by pulling the vine roots out of the ground, and drying all in the sun before threshing..." (Angel 1883:229-230; Ochs 1970:18).

The Chinese also mined cinnabar, which is heated to obtain mercury. Deposits of the ore, found in the mountains of the northern part of the county, were discovered above present-day Cambria in 1862. By 1879 the county had at least fifty operating cinnabar mines (Angel 1883:250-251; Ochs 1970:17; Krieger 1988:70). Chinese laborers had settled in the Cambria-San Simeon area in the 1860s. Although some of these men came to work in the mines, shipments from the San Simeon wharf in 1869 included $3,000 worth of "Chinese produce, etc." (Angel 1883:331).

Shipments from this wharf in 1880 reflected the agricultural development of the county, and the diversity of its population. Seven hundred and twenty-five tons of grain were loaded. Wheat had become the county's major product, followed by dairy products. Shipments of "3,934 boxes of butter; 930 firkins and barrels of butter" were sent by the area's dairy farmers (Angel 1883:226, 332). Many were Italian Swiss and Portuguese, who had emigrated from the disrupted economies of their homelands (Krieger 1988:69-70). Portuguese whalers based at San Simeon contributed "299 packages of whale oil" (Angel 1883:332, 333; Krieger 1988:71). The Chinese shipped "104 neats [nests] of sea-weed; 169 sacks of abalones," and contributed to the total of "169 flasks of quicksilver" (Angel 1883:332). Other freight included wool, eggs, live chickens and hogs, and, in a recollection of the rancho days, hides and tallow (Angel 1883:332).

To the south, John Price, in March 1874, joined the Board of Directors of the newly legislated San Luis Obispo & Santa Maria Valley Railroad, "for the purpose of constructing a railroad from San Luis Bay to the valley of the Santa Maria River, and on through Santa Barbara County to Santa Barbara itself" (Best 1964:18). The narrow-gauge track between the Railroad Wharf and

the City of San Luis Obispo was completed in August, 1876 (Angel 1883:320). With the expectation of increased settlement and dairy products, preparations began that year for the arrival of the line in the south county. Price built the Pismo Hotel about this time; the Dana family had their rancho surveyed preparatory to division and sale (Dana 1969:37; Ditmas 1983:275).

The little town of Arroyo Grande, growing to meet the needs of the area's settlers, had expanded in 1876 to "two hotels, two stores well supplied with goods, two saloons, a wheel wright and blacksmith shop, post-office, a school house, butcher shop, laundry, livery and feed stable, and quite a number of private residences" (Newsom, quoted in Angel 1883:351).

The *Alta*'s correspondent in January, 1876 urged settlement in the county, noting "a soil and climate suited for grain, every variety of fruit and vegetables second to none in the State," and enthusiastically described the growth of San Luis Obispo since 1871:

> Since then the increase of improvements in and about the place has been so marked, that...it seemed like a new country, and new place and people...The number of new structures altogether goes into the hundreds at least....The town proper countains about 2500 people, is lighted with gas and has a supply of corporation water...with the telegraph already secured, the town of San Luis, as well as other towns in the county, need not feel entirely cut off from the rest of the civilized world....(*Alta California*, January 20, 1876:2).

The correspondent also observered that "the large landowners are disposed to break up their tracts" (*Alta California*, January 20, 1876:2), as more settlers sought homes and farms. Leader in the new real estate boom was Chauncey H. Phillips, lauded by his comtemporaries for his entrepreneurial ability: "...Mr. Phillips makes circumstances conform to his desires, and is at once ready to reap all the advantages that may arise" (Angel 1883:n.p.). He arrived in San Luis Obispo in 1871 and co-founded the county's first bank that year. By 1875, he was selling town lots in the "Phillips addition" near the court house, had acquired controlling interest in the Rancho Morro y Cayucos, and was laying out the town of Cayucos and offering parcels for sale on the former rancho land (Cooper 1875:19, 30; Angel 1883:n.p.).

New Farms, New Towns, New Buildings: the 1880s

In 1882, the Steele brothers asked Chauncey Phillips to sell much of the land they had acquired in 1866. Although their dairies had been highly successful, the firm failed in other businesses, and had fought a costly legal battle for clear title to the Corral de Piedra (Angel 1883:n.p.; Krieger 1988:67). By 1894 the Steeles' large holdings, land-grant ranchos which had been turned into a gigantic dairy operation, were described as "peopled by hundreds of intelligent and industrious farmers" (*San Luis Obispo Tribune* 1894:43).

Work began in 1881 on the rail line south of the city of San Luis Obispo. Crews started grading track in June for the Pacific Coast Railroad, an offshoot company of the San Luis Obispo and Santa Maria Valley Railroad; the two organizations merged in 1882 to form the Pacific Coast Railway Company (Best 1964:25, 33).

> By the end of July the track was halfway to Arroyo Grande, which had donated a right of way through the town and a site for the station and warehouse... Beyond Arroyo Grande the roadbed across the Nipomo Rancho was already being graded, while the streets of the town were crowded with wagons hauling grain to the new loading dock. The pile of grain sacks totaled 25,000 by early October....The track reached the station site in Arroyo Grande October 12, 1881, and no sooner had the gang passed the platform than the task of loading the vast accumulation of grain began...Three trainloads a day left for Port Harford....(Best 1964:25).

Track was laid across the Nipomo Rancho in March, 1882, reaching Santa Maria on April 22, and Los Alamos, its terminal for six years, on October 1, 1882 (Best 1964:29, 33).

The Dana family met in the first week of April, 1882, "for the purpose of partitioning the ranch." William Dana's twelve remaining children drew lots for tracts surveyed on the 31,000-acre rancho, leaving 12,000 acres as common property. Most of the Dana brothers planned "to select a farm of four or five hundred acres each for their individual purposes and place the remainder of their allotments upon the market for sale" (*San Luis Obispo Tribune*, April 8, 1882, quoted in Dana 1969:40). The Danas promptly laid out a town site to be called Nipomo.

> ...They donated land for a railroad station, warehouse and loading platform. Calling attention to this new town, and no doubt hoping to sell a few building lots in the process, a grand excursion was held on May 6 to Nipomo. A thousand people assembled on the picnic grounds there, easily the largest crowd ever gathered together at one time along the central California coast (Best 1964:29).

Historian Myron Angel observed in 1883 that "the region about Arroyo Grande is of the highest fertility," noting that 6,530 acres in the valley had been planted the previous year to beans "of a superior quality" (Angel 1883:229, 353). He remarked that "the coming of the railroad necessarily brought about many changes in the once quiet and sleepy village" of Arroyo Grande. Improvements included a drug store, a new general store, a renovated flour and grist mill, two ditches "whose capacity was equal to irrigating 3,000 acres of land," and the grain warehouse by the railroad (Angel 1883:352-353).

The Pacific Coast Railway carried passengers as well as freight, and their fares contributed a considerable portion of the railroad's income. Excursions were especially popular:

> An excursion recorded for posterity in the *Tribune* in May 1883 demonstrated the enthusiasm and eagerness of the populace to ride a train and see the country. At San Luis Obispo, three coaches and a baggage car formed the train, but the crowd was so great that several flat cars, hastily fitted with chairs, then five boxcars with benches were added before all the excursionists were seated. Filled to capacity, the train reached Arroyo Grande, where a flatcar fitted with benches was waiting, with 150 people trying to board it. Somehow they all managed to make it, but at Santa Maria 300 had to be left behind, as there were no more cars, and people were hanging on the steps and even sitting on the roofs of the coaches. To make matters worse, the engine could not haul the 14 cars loaded with 1400 people up the grade in Graciosa Canyon, and had to triple the train up the hill by leaving

> most of it behind. Setting out the first third at the siding at Divide, two more trips down the hill and back had to be made, rolling the hungry excursionists into Los Alamos over two hours late. Hence there was no time for the Maypole exercises or any other entertainment; everyone had to eat and hasten back to the train (Best 1964:39).

Like the railroad, the Pismo Rancho benefitted both from the increasing agricultural production of the south county and from a growing population, looking for a pleasant way to spend their leisure time. The Pismo Wharf was completed by the Meherin brothers in September, 1881, and was "proven of great benefit to the agricultural interests of the neighboring country" (Angel 1883:322, 352). John Price soon moved his Pismo Hotel to the waterfront near the wharf (Ditmas 1983:275). Although Price did not found the town of Pismo until 1886, the beach had become an established recreational attraction by 1885 (Nicholson 1980:77-78; Automobile Club of Southern California 1993:42). Traveling to the Pismo in August, 1885, Myron Angel had lunch at the hotel, noting that some of the guests had come from San Francisco and the San Joaquin Valley. He observed visitors enjoying rides in their carriages along the shore. Campers on the beach and nearby had "...cooking and dining facilities, nice sized tents for sleeping, rocking chairs and, in some cases, sewing machines. Covered wagons and carriages with sleek horses and strong mules were a part of every camp site" (Nicholson 1980:78).

Anticipating the arrival on the coast of the Southern Pacific Railroad, which was laying track south of Soledad in 1886, Dwight W. Grover and a partner subdivided land west of Arroyo Grande in 1887 (Nicholson 1980:19, 81; Hall-Patton 1994:63). Sales went well during the auction of lots at what was to be called Grover City. Construction of the Southern Pacific line through the south county, however, was eight years away, and "the subdivision passed from promoter to promoter" (Hall-Patton 1994:63). The community grew little until well into the twentieth century, and did not acquire a post office until 1947 (Frickstad 1955:n.p.)

Land sales were also being promoted on the Nipomo Rancho in 1887. That July, the five-year old town of Nipomo (above) included, besides its railway depot and warehouse:

> ...two hotels, a general store, a wagon and blacksmith shop, a schoolhouse, an agricultural implement and hardware store, a livery and feed stable, four real estate offices, three saloons, and a newspaper called the *Nipomo News* that put out its first issue in July 1887....E.G. Dana was the new town postmaster, and there was a telegraph and Wells Fargo office (Nicholson 1980:80-81).

Like the county's farmlands, the City of San Luis Obispo changed and grew during the 1880s. Among the brick buildings constructed in 1883-1884 were the San Luis Obispo Bank, Loobliner's General Store, and the new stores of two pioneer merchandising firms, the Goldtree Brothers and the Sinsheimer Brothers (Nicholson 1971;15, 32; Stern and Kramer 1973:3). The Goldtrees, as noted above, arrived in San Luis Obispo in the late 1850s and were financial backers of the People's Wharf in 1869. They actively promoted San Luis Obispo County's growth, investing in the narrow-gauge railways from San Luis Obispo to the port and to Los Alamos, and campaigning to bring the Southern Pacific line across the county (*San Luis Obispo Tribune* 1894:88-89). Among their other enterprises were banking, ranching, and land subdivision (*San Luis Obispo Tribune* 1894:89; Nicholson 1980:151). Despite the construction of the new building and San Luis Obispo's progress, however, in 1894 the *Tribune* reported that the Goldtrees' "interests have outgrown the store and the County." Although Nathan Goldtree

had "lost none of his interest in this County and City," he had moved to San Francisco and his "largest business interests are in San Salvador, where he in connection with his brothers has extensive coffee plantations" (*San Luis Obispo Tribune* 1894:88-89).

In contrast, the brick store built by the Sinsheimer brothers in 1884 has been described as "a living symbol of historic continuity" (Stern and Kramer 1973:32). The first of the Sinsheimer family, Bernhard, came to San Luis Obispo in 1874. He clerked two years for Pollard and Beebee in their store, which had been the town's first. In 1876, Bernhard and his brother Henry were able to buy Pollard and Beebee's building and to establish their own mercantile firm. They were joined in 1878 by a third brother, Aaron, who with his sons would eventually run the business (Stern and Kramer 1973:9, 11, 13). The firm advertised in 1878 that they sold "Groceries, Both Staple and Fancy—Crockery, Tinware, Hardware— Boots & Shoes, Dry Goods, Clothing" and that they would buy "all kinds of Produce, Hides, Pelts & Wool...Grain" (Stern and Kramer 1973:10).

By 1884, the Sinsheimers' business had outgrown Pollard and Beebee's adobe. Construction of the new two-story building began on July 8 of that year. Some of the bricks for its walls were made in the local brickyard of Ah Louis (see 1870s, above). "A great iron front" was cast at San Francisco's City Iron Works. The building was finished in December and, like Ah Louis's store, is still in use, "one of the best preserved structures of the iron front style in the nation" (Stern and Kramer 1973:12-13).

In 1894, the *Tribune* observed:

> In the last decade, as is the usual fashion, the course of business has materially changed, merchants arriving who confined their attention to special branches, as the dry goods or the hardware or the grocery department, exclusively, but Sinsheimer Bros. have still continued to cover the whole ground of ranch supplies....(*San Luis Obispo Tribune* 1894:86).

Winnie Lee Moore, whose family settled in the Huer Huero area in 1884, recalled that they traded at the little local store in Creston, but "once or twice a year supplies were bought from Sinsheimer's store in San Luis Obispo...." (Winnie Lee Moore, in Keyser 1964:33).

Bernhard Sinsheimer established, along with the family business, a tradition of community involvement; he served as a trustee of San Luis Obispo for four years in the late 1880s (*San Luis Obispo Tribune* 1894:86; Stern and Kramer 1973:11). The Sinsheimers continued into the twentieth century as active citizens of their town.

In 1885, civic boosters of San Luis Obispo, including Chauncey Phillips, the Goldtrees, and the Sinsheimers, invested in the town's first grand hotel. The Andrews Hotel, a three-story wooden "modern gothic" structure, opened with great fanfare in July of that year (Nicholson 1971:15-17, 20). Some of the old adobes had been replaced by frame buildings, and with only a scattering of brick structures, "San Luis Obispo was predominantly a wooden town," constantly in danger of fire (Nicholson 1971:28). In April, 1886, nine months after its opening, the Andrews, "the grand pride and ornament of the city," burned to the ground (Nicholson 1971:37-38).

The day after the fire, subscriptions for a new hotel were solicited at a town meeting. Despite the plea for a building "not in wood, but in brick, if possible," the city's promoters constructed

another frame hotel, larger than the Andrews. The new establishment, the Ramona, opened in October, 1888; it burned down in 1905 (Nicholson 1971:39, 41, 44; 1980:88, 183).

Slower Growth in San Luis Obispo, Fields of Flowers Around Arroyo Grande: the 1890s

Both the Andrews and the Ramona represented San Luis Obispo's hope that the long-awaited arrival of the Southern Pacific Railway would bring increased population, business activity, and tourism to the town. In part because of the nationwide financial panic of 1893 and the ensuing depression, this optimistic projection was not realized. The first Southern Pacific train arrived in San Luis Obispo on May 5, 1894. The town's population grew from 2,995 in 1890 to 3,021 in 1900, an increment of only twenty-six persons (Curry 1973:45). The city changed during the 1890s, however, and its connections to the outside world were strengthened.

Electricity became available to San Luis Obispo residents in 1889; a telephone line was introduced in 1893, the year that the city's first public library was established (Nicholson 1980:102, 148). Southern Pacific built a depot, roundhouse, siding yards, and a turntable "for reversing the engines for the return trip to San Francisco" (Nicholson 1980:182). Work on the line to the south continued sporadically, but the last gap along the coastal route was not closed until 1904. In late 1894, a traveler from San Francisco to Santa Barbara would arrive on the train in San Luis Obispo, take the city's horse-drawn streetcar to the depot of the narrow-gauge Pacific Coast Railway, and travel on that line to Los Olivos, where a stagecoach continued on over San Marcos Pass.

The Souvenir Railroad Edition of the *San Luis Obispo Tribune*, issued to celebrate the train's arrival in 1894, contained advertisements for tracts of land on old ranchos in the county, including Arroyo Grande and Nipomo. The fertility of the soil in the Arroyo Grande Valley was perhaps exaggerated in this description of produce grown on C.A. Pitkin's farm: "One year less than half an acre was planted to carrots, from which 50 tons were taken, and while big cabbages are not a specialty on this place, 50 pound heads are considered common, not to mention squashes that weigh 250 to 300 pounds" (*San Luis Obispo Tribune* 1894:45).

By the 1890s, the valley was producing a wide diversity of grains, vegetables, and fruits (whatever their size). Flowers also grew well. Citizens of San Luis Obispo "crowded the narrow gauge" for the 1892 flower show presented by the Arroyo Grande Floral Society (Nicholson 1980:128).

Seed farms established in the valley during the 1890s included McClure's, which produced both vegetables and flowers, and Routzahn's, which produced only flowers (Nicholson 1980:183; Ditmas 1983:37, 116). Routzahn, starting his enterprise on a farm near Arroyo Grande, acquired about 500 acres in the lower valley, not far from present-day Oceano. One of the specialties of the Routzahn seed farm was sweet peas:

> It was during the nineties that Mr. Routzahn gave to the women of the various churches thousands of sweet pea blossoms for the annual Sweet Pea Fair. The "opera house" was where the fairs were held. On the opening day, the women would gather early in the morning at the sweet pea fields to cut thousands of the fragrant and beautifully tinted flowers. After the big clothes baskets and other

> receptacles were filled with the blossoms they were taken to the opera house, where long tables were covered with bouquets of the most beautiful blooms. And the walls were covered with greenery and floral "pieces" such as the American flag, ships, horseshoes, and numerous other designs, which were made from the fragrant blossoms (Ditmas 1983:37, 270).

Sweet peas were a garden favorite well into the twentieth century. Ah Louis, the Chinese leader and pioneer businessman in San Luis Obispo, started his seed farms in 1897, with some acreage in the Arroyo Grande Valley. His son, Young Louis, recalled that "he shipped the seeds out by the carload.... Sometimes there were two or three carloads of sweetpea flowers. For example, one year we were taking care of two hundred and some varieties of sweetpeas growing at the same time. Boy, what a job it was keeping them separated...."(Wong 1987:31).

Freight carried on the narrow-gauge, like the carloads of flower seeds, was mainly agricultural, but the south county's asphaltum and oil shale deposits near Edna provided a steady business. In 1883, the owners of an asphaltum mine had "contracted with the railroad company to take one hundred tons a month to the wharf...." (Angel 1883:254). Oil shale "was quarried and shipped by the thousands of tons"...(Best 1964:47). The deposits also indicated the presence of oil, which was discovered in San Luis Obispo County early in the twentieth century.

In 1896, when the slowly advancing line of the Southern Pacific crossed the Santa Ynez River, the company built a spur to Lompoc, which became the northern terminus for the stage to Santa Barbara. Passenger travel diminished on the Pacific Coast Railway, and its daily passenger train was changed to a "mixed" train, hauling both riders and freight (Best 1964:49).

The Pacific Coast Railway and the Southern Pacific brought many changes to the south county, but not all that had been envisioned. Oceano, like Grover City, was developed in response to the anticipated arrival of the Southern Pacific. In the spring of 1893, a group of promoters bought land on the right-of-way southwest of Arroyo Grande, and mapped out a town which was to be a summer resort. City lots were surrounded by "...'villa' sites ranging from two to ten acres." The planned grand hotel was never built, but in 1895, when the Southern Pacific line reached Oceano, the promoters paid for a spur to the beach, and constructed a large pavilion there (Nicholson 1980:139-142, 184). Oceano did not grow into the major resort envisioned by its developers. It became, instead "a community supported principally by truck crop agricultural products and a vegetable processing plant" (Nicholson 1980:139).

Further up the coast, improvements at Port Harford during the 1890s brought the world closer to San Luis Obispo County. The new lighthouse, a federal project, was finished in May, 1890. Work on the breakwater, also constructed with federal funding, began in 1888 and was ongoing throughout the 1890s (Shinn 1901:130; Nicholson 1980:103, 110).

The population of the county remained small—about 18,000 persons in 1900 (Shinn 1901:130). Increased settlement, however, had brought about a greatly expanded school system. From the one-room school at Mission San Luis Obispo in 1850, educational facilities had grown by the end of the century to ninety-seven school districts and three high schools (Shinn 1901:130). In 1894, Myron Angel, historian, editor, and dedicated booster of San Luis Obispo County, embarked on a major contribution to the future of education in the city and county. He began a campaign for the school that would eventually be Cal Poly; its establishment was approved by the state legislature in 1901 (Kreiger 1988:98-99; Nicholson 1989:SLO 15-16).

Agricultural San Luis Obispo County was described in a 1901 *Sunset* article as "a vast region of wonderful possibilities" (Shinn 1901:120). In 1904 the *San Francisco Chronicle* reported on "fertile San Luis Obispo," listing its attractions for settlers. The reporter echoed the area's nineteenth- century plaint, however: "What this county needs most is more population" (*San Francisco Chronicle*, February 13, 1904:7). The city was described as having:

> ...a good sewer system, an abundant supply of pure mountain spring water, electric light and gas works, and an efficient volunteer fire organization. The streets are broad and well kept, those in the business district being paved with bitumen, which is mined near here. The California State Polytechnic School is located here....(*San Francisco Chronicle*, February 13, 1904:7).

Cal Poly

E.J. Wickson, Professor of Agriculture at the State University, Berkeley, served as a Trustee for the Polytechnic School and commented during its formation in 1902:

> [Wickson] believed the school should be rural in character rather than to attempt to cover the more purely technical branches of most of the older established colleges...He said the President of the University urged them to make a school that would teach a lady pupil to make a good pumpkin pie (Angel 1908:76).

Classes began at the college on October 1, 1903, although the buildings were not completely finished. Leroy Anderson, formerly head of the Dairy Department at Berkeley, had been appointed director, with a faculty of three: S.S. Twombley, University of Maine, math and science; Miss Gwendolyn Stewart, Stanford, domestic science and English; O.L. Heald, Throop Institute, carpentry, sloyd [woodcarving, described in 1903 as "woodworking for girls"], and drawing. Fifteen students were enrolled. The *Tribune* saluted the school and its pupils: "Growth is the watchword for both the school and for the brave and earnest young people who honor its beginning with their presence" (*San Luis Obispo Tribune*, October 1, 1903, quoted in Angel 1908:92-94).

Further courses were added to the curriculum in March, 1904. Director Anderson reported in March, 1907 that the faculty had increased to ten, and the student body to one hundred and one, including 70 males, 31 females (Angel 1908:97-98, 115). A reporter in 1906 listed the expanded technical curriculum and noted:

> English, history, economics, mathematics, botany, entomology, chemistry, physics and other academic subjects are mingled with each of the above courses ....The school is of secondary grade, admitting pupils who have finished the grammar grades and are fifteen years old. It is filling a long-felt want in giving an education, on practical lines of domestic science, agriculture, and mechanics, to the many who cannot attend the universities (Ent 1906:461-462).

Cal Poly, of course, developed into a university, and its growth has been such that it was recently referred to as "present day San Luis Obispo's principal business" (Harth, Krieger, and Krieger 1991:vi).

"The Future of this Region is Very Bright": Growth in the South County

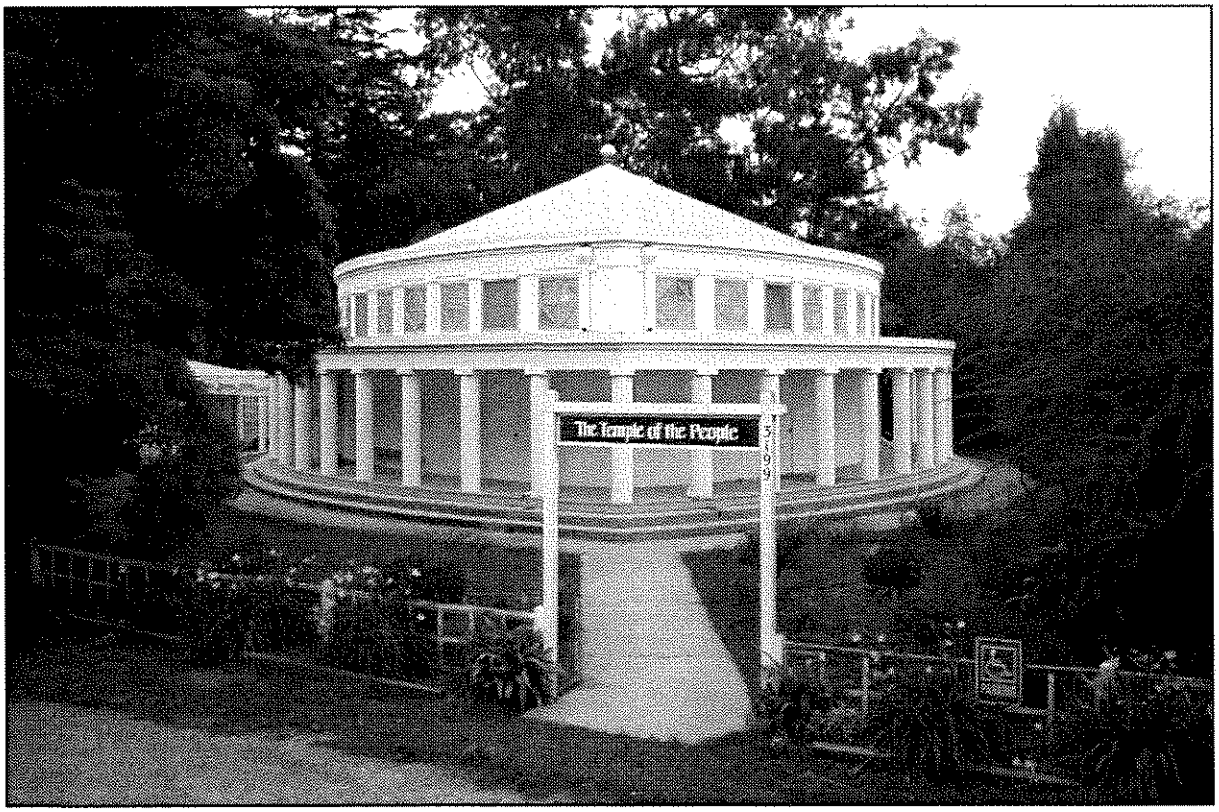
The 1901 *Sunset* report on San Luis Obispo County included this description of the Arroyo Grande Valley:

> There is no richer and more prosperous part of the county than in the Arroyo Grande district, southeast of San Luis Obispo. This region is a garden spot, famous all over the United States for its vegetables, its immense crops of beans, beets, onions and other products which require for their greatest perfection 'cleared willow land,' soil of enormous fertility, abundant water and a mild climate. The future of this region is very bright; it will be claimed rapidly for intensive horticulture and used in large degree for raising seeds for the world's markets, for certain classes of bulbs, and for such vegetables and flowers as can be shipped abroad. A large seed farm is already established here and is chiefly devoted to sweet peas and other garden and field seeds, which are sold to various American seedsmen (Shinn 1901:109).

Author J. Smeaton Chase, riding horseback the length of the California coast in 1912, spoke of the south county with evident admiration. Passing through Nipomo, he visited William Dana's eldest son, John, "and was received with all possible kindness." The Danas demonstrated the hospitality for which the Nipomo Rancho was famous; he "was entertained that night at the ranch of another one of the family, a mile farther up the valley. It needed an ample table to accommodate the three generations of Danas with whom I sat at supper...." Chase rode the next day "through the rich grain-land of the Nipomo," and noted the Arroyo Grande Valley as "a region famous especially for the growing of seeds. On leaving the prosperous little town we took the road once more toward the coast, which we struck near El Pizmo...." (Chase 1913:141-143).

Chase's route bypassed a recently established community near the coast, which, differing from the south county's new towns of the 1880s and 1890s, had been founded with little concern for the Southern Pacific line. In 1903, the Temple of the People, a small group of Theosophists led by Dr. William Dower and Mrs. Francia LaDue, bought farm land just east of Oceano, naming their settlement Halcyon. Their beliefs included a mixture of eastern and western thought and a strong commitment to the brotherhood of man (Hine 1973:54-55). Dr. Dower converted the Coffee Rice mansion, a large Victorian structure in Oceano, to a sanatorium (Hine 1973:55; Ditmas 1983:288). "The colony grew vegetables and grains, such as oats and barley, and early developed profitable crops of sugar beets and flower seeds. In periods of cultivation and harvest the hiring of local Japanese supplemented the labor of members" (Hine 1973:56).

> It was a stimulating place to live. Few of the residents had much money, and many, like John Varian, weren't very practical or realistic, but they had a common interest in the Temple, and they were a very supportive community. Originally, they had been looked upon with mistrust by the nearby farmers and townspeople, suspicious of their tent homes, the sanitarium they operated, their generally socialist and liberal views, and their neoclassical Temple....However, as time passed, most of the tent houses, except those used as guest houses, had been replaced by cottages; the community had proved to be friendly and not obtrusive and its residents accepted as odd but good neighbors (Varian 1983:49).



Temple of the People, Halcyon. Courtesy of Mathew Whittlesey.

John and Agnes Varian and their three sons, Russell, Sigurd, and Eric, moved from Palo Alto to Halcyon in July, 1914. Agnes ran the post office, and John took what jobs he could find, including assisting Dr. Dower in "a small medical practice in nearby Arroyo Grande" (Varian 1983:47, 49). The Varians' home became "a center for hospitality, community activities, discussions, classes, and musical programs" (Varian 1983:55).

> In talking about his adolescent years, Russell said he thought Halcyon had been an ideal place in which to grow up. In his opinion, the young people of his generation and the next, who had lived all or part of their formative years in Halcyon had done exceptionally well with their lives. He gave much of the credit to the atmosphere of the community and the kind of people who lived there (Varian 1983:48).

Among Russell's boyhood friends in Halcyon were Henry Cowell, later a distinguished composer, and George Harrison, who became a well-known physicist and the dean of science at M.I.T. Russell and Sigurd went on to invent the klystron tube, used in radar and communications, and to pioneer in other microwave applications (Varian 1983:48, 182, 269).

The Varians arrived in Halcyon less than a month before the outbreak of World War I. American farmers were soon urged to help ease food shortages in Europe by planting emergency crops, particularly navy beans, which "in the days before refrigeration was common...provided the most versatile emergency food source" (Krieger 1988:72). The Arroyo Grande Valley, long known for its beans, was soon covered with bean fields, and most of the warehouses along the

Pacific Coast Railway added bean-cleaning towers (Krieger 1988:73). The crops produced good incomes, since the price of cleaned navy beans was subsidized and "rose from 11 ½ cents to nearly 30 cents a pound" (Krieger 1988:73).

After the war, the valley soon returned to agricultural diversity. Around 1925, Japanese farmers who had specialized in growing green peas on the south county hills began to move into the lower valley, where irrigation made possible the year-round raising of a variety of vegetable crops. "By the late 1920s the lower Arroyo Grande Valley in the Oceano district was the most important vegetable farming region in San Luis Obispo County, and the irrigated poled peas grown in this valley became famous throughout the country for their fine quality and unique sweet taste" (Krieger 1988:158).

The flower seed fields in the lower valley were extensive. By the mid-1920s, Routzahn's seed farm and other local properties had been acquired by the Waller-Franklin Seed Company, a large firm based in Guadalupe. They advertised as "wholesale growers exclusively of Annual and Perennial Flower Seeds" (*Seed World* 1934:86; Ditmas 1983:117, 153, 155). The fields were described by Ella Young, an Irish writer who rented the Varians' guest cottage in 1928:

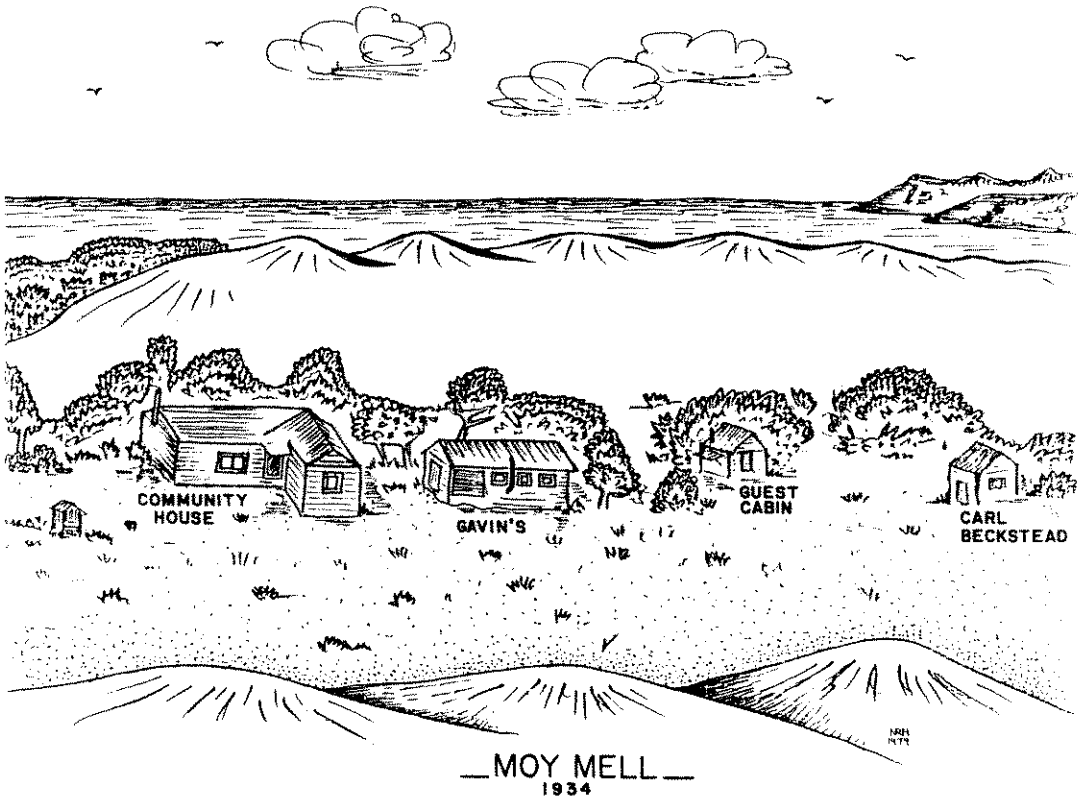
> I can pick my way across a thin stream, a walnut plantation, and a scantily grassed field to the great stretch of the Waller-Franklin Seed Farm, that flat Halcyon valley laid out by the acre in delphiniums, poppies, hollyhocks, pansies, veronicas, and all the flowers one can think of. When I have pleased myself with the Oriental carpet spread wide by the low-growing veronicas all intermingled purple, scarlet, rose and violet, I lose myself in a forest of delphiniums marvellously blue...(Young 1945:228-229).

On a beach picnic with the Varians, Ella Young learned of another wonderful, but hidden, world. A visiting playwright, Maurice Browne, described meeting some of the men who lived in the dunes:

> The sand-dunes were hilly as the Sahara; in their hollows tall scrub grew thickly; brackish water, drinkable when boiled, could be had by digging two or three feet; the scrub hid far-scattered shacks; amid it smoke rose each weekday. On Sunday no fires were lit; from a high dune a stranger would look across a thousand acres and see no sign of human habitation....Hans, a German poet, introduced me to them. Surprisingly, they gave me the freedom of their territory. They were of many kinds. At one extreme an elderly clam poacher with retarded mental development....At the other extreme a Canadian ex-bank-manager subscribed to *The New Republic* and had a shelf of books by his bed: Thoreau, Emerson, Whitman, Aeschylus....(Browne 1956:280-281).

Ella Young wrote later:

> Gavin Arthur and Carl Beckstead are living in an oasis on the Dunes. They have not even a tent. They have a well, and something to set on a fire-something to boil water in or cook a fish if they catch one. They journey to my Halcyon cottage at times and tell me of their adventures. It makes me wish to be a hermit. As the next best thing I've come out to spend some hours on the Dunes. We sit on the



Drawing of Moy Mell by Norm Hammond. Courtesy of the artist.

> sun-baked sand: Gavin, Carl, Hugo, and John Doggett. I am looking at cloud patterns, but the others are talking of Plato, of cosmic cycles, and recurrent periods of civilization, talking of Atlantis and the lost continent of Mu... presently Hugo and John go their ways each to his own territory (Young 1945:238- 239).

Gavin Arthur, grandson of President Chester Arthur and well-to-do, lived simply in the dunes, as Ella Young described, and then decided to build. In 1932, his compound included his cabin, Carl Beckstead's, a cabin for guests, and a community house. The place, called Moy Mell, drew numerous visitors and was the base from which Gavin Arthur published a thought-provoking magazine called the *Dune Forum* (Hammond 1992:27-28,34-49).

Although Gavin Arthur's stay on the coast attracted special attention in the 1930s, the first man looking to the dunes for another way of life arrived before World War I, and the last solitary resident did not leave until 1974 (Hammond 1992:11-12, 114). Norm Hammond has carefully researched those who lived in the dunes during the sixty-odd years, and his book, *The Dunites*, is a sympathetic and evocative description of a world as unknown to most south county residents as the Dunites wished it to be.

"A Love Affair with the Automobile"

By 1918, only six years after Chase's horseback ride up the coast, one car was registered for

every ten people in California (Johnson 1973:163). Mary Gail Black, a reporter for the San Luis Obispo *Daily Telegram* from 1921 to 1923, recalled the local enthusiasm for automobiles:

> In my day on the *Telegram*, the town had a love affair with the automobile.... Automobile advertising in the *Telegram* featured the Ford and the Buick, but a dozen other agencies offered cars with names that are now history. Hardly an old-timer is around to recall the sight of the Star, the Durant, the Chalmers, the Dusenberg, the Reo, the Hudson, the Oakland, the Graham, the Packard (which outlived the others) on the roads around the state and the county, vigorously competing, one against the other....Most people still rode the trains that passed through daily, for not everybody had an automobile....Not many roads in the county were suitable for automobile travel; they were unpaved and winding. At bad corners there was the sign: "Sound Your Klaxon"....As people rode the trains, so were horses still ridden and driven--fewer as the number of automobiles increased, but still noticeable as transportation (Black 1988:41-42).

The state's proliferation of automobiles and consequent road improvements brought San Luis Obispo the tourist industry which the city's nineteenth- century entrepreneurs had envisioned when they built their grand hotels, the Andrews and the Ramona. In summer, 1925, Geographer John Coulter observed:

> The situation of San Luis Obispo on the state highway about halfway between San Francisco and Los Angeles makes it a favorite 'stop over' for tourists traveling by automobile between these cities...It is estimated that during June, July and August, 350 tourists a night rest in the eight hotels of the city...Seventy-five per cent of the hotel business of the city is tourist business, less than ten per cent of which comes by train (Coulter 1931:314-315).

Under construction as Coulter studied San Luis Obispo was the first lodging in the world to be called a "motel"—the Motel Inn at the northern end of Monterey Street. Architect Arthur Heineman designed the Inn's buildings in Mission Revival style, "as if the padres were taking in travelers for the night the way they did in the days of El Camino Real" (Patton 1986:127). It opened that December (Dart 1978:75).

Maino's pioneering garage continued in service, but motorists in 1925 had their choice of "twelve garages and eighteen gasoline stations on Higuera and Monterey Streets" (Coulter 1931:309).

"All Honor to Mr. Sinsheimer": San Luis Obispo, 1919-1939

The economic base which mechanized transportation provided for San Luis Obispo included not only tourism, but the Union Oil pipeline, the Pacific Coast Railway, and particularly the Southern Pacific Railway, which employed about 500 men (Coulter 1931:315). The town's bread and butter, however, were just that—wheat and other agricultural products, which farmers shipped and sold in town, and for the cultivation of which they bought equipment and supplies. "Much the most important manufacturing industry in the city" was butter-making; using cream from the local dairy farms, creameries in and near San Luis Obispo produced 4,000,000 pounds of butter a year (Coulter 1931:315-316).

Louis Sinsheimer

The importance of the nearby agricultural areas to the business activities of San Luis Obispo is shown by the close correlation between prosperity, or the lack of it, in city and country. During and immediately after years of heavy and well-distributed precipitation, there is much more activity in the business circles of the city than there is during and after years of subnormal or poorly distributed rainfall. Farmers have money to spend on luxuries, and their prosperity means prosperity for the business men of the city. The banking activities of the three banks in the city are closely dependent upon the merchandising activities and upon the agricultural communities. Officers of these banks indicated to the writer that much of their business comes directly or indirectly from people engaged in farming (Coulter 1931:314).

The mayor of San Luis Obispo at the time of Coulter's work was one of "the business men of the city," Louis Sinsheimer, elected mayor in 1919. Sinsheimer, whose family established both its business and its civic participation in the 1870s, was described as:

> ...very much the traditionalist in his concern for the family store and the community. He liked to keep things as they were, insisting that Sinsheimer Brothers retain its historical profile and appearance. In the community he was called 'the greatest exponent of the idea that San Luis Obispo is a way of living rather than a city' (Stern and Kramer 1973:20).

Sinsheimer served as mayor for twenty years, with his efforts to "keep things as they were" including support for the restoration of Mission San Luis Obispo (Krieger 1988:110-111). This splendid example of his conservatism was reported in September, 1924:

> All honor to Mr. Sinsheimer, mayor of San Luis Obispo. Saturday afternoon when Mayor Sinsheimer discovered two street workmen cutting down a shade tree in front of his house...he got out his revolver and drove them away. The workmen were in the employ of a Los Angeles contractor who is paving the street. They chopped down two of the trees before the mayor heard of the atrocity and got into action. He is preparing to file suit against the contractor. The world needs more men like the San Luis Obispo mayor (*Stockton Record*, September 29, 1924, quoted in Stern and Kramer 1973:22).

The economy which Sinsheimer practiced in city government extended to leaving uncashed twenty years' worth of warrants for his salary as mayor. After his death, in 1951, the Sinsheimer family asked that the money be awarded to their charitable trust, which was used to "relieve suffering, alleviate distress, misfortune or poverty of any resident of the city." The community of San Luis Obispo commemorated their "traditionalist" mayor with the Sinsheimer School, dedicated in October, 1954 (Stern and Kramer 1973:22-23).

Louis Sinsheimer's mayoralty, begun a few months after the close of World War I, ended in 1939, on the eve of World War II. The town of San Luis Obispo during those twenty years was more marked in its ethnic diversity than it had been before the first World War, or would be after the second. Chinatown, on Palm Street between Chorro and Morro, included both residences and commercial enterprises. Ah Louis, who had been acknowledged as the leader of the Chinese community died in 1936, at the age of 98; his leadership and civic involvement were carried on by his children (Ochs 1970:24).

On Higuera between French and South Streets, the county's Japanese farmers established a commercial center. Businesses included: the Watanabe store (Wholesale and Retail Fruits and Vegetables); a garage; fish market; barber shop; vegetable stand; an ice cream parlor; a hotel; and a boardinghouse (D. and L. Krieger 1991:126,159). Japanese laborers came to work on the farms around Arroyo Grande shortly after the turn of the century, and gradually began to grow their own crops, mainly on leased land (D. and L. Krieger 1991:127-128). By the 1920s and 1930s, these farm families were participants in San Luis Obispo County's mainstream activities: baseball, the Boy Scouts, patriotic celebrations, civic improvements (D. and L. Krieger 1991:126-127, 132, 134, 157). In 1931, a block-long street in the Japanese business center was named for Tameji Eto, a leader in the Japanese community (D. and L. Krieger 1991:159).

Tameji Eto and his wife. From the Archives of the San Luis Obispo County Historical Society.

Some Japanese families enjoyed friendly, cooperative relationships with their Euroamerican neighbors (D. and L. Krieger 1991:129, 134). Prejudice in 1930s San Luis Obispo, however, was recalled by Paul Piantanida, the son of Italian immigrants:

> We lived on the wrong side of the tracks, south of Broad and South where the Pacific Coast Railroad used to cross. Most of us were Italian, Portuguese, Mexican, Japanese or Chinese. We all came in for a lot of name calling (L. Krieger 1991:96).

World War II

War fever, following the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, swept away the respect, trust, and friendship many Japanese residents had established in their communities. Although there were friends and neighbors who continued to help in any way they could, San Luis Obispo County's Japanese population quickly became "the enemy" (D. and L. Krieger 1991:141-150). Tameji Eto, who had been "cited as a prominent resident of the county" in 1939, was arrested at his ranch the night of December 7, and taken to detention (D. and L. Krieger 1991:144, 152). On February 19, 1942, President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, which set in motion the relocation from the coastal counties of "all persons of Japanese descent," regardless of American citizenship. Families were disrupted, crops lost, homes and possessions abandoned. The City Council of San Luis Obispo reflected the local war hysteria as they voted unanimously, five days after the executive order, to change the name of Eto Street to Brook Street (D. and L. Krieger 1991:160).

Walter Tanaka, who graduated from San Luis Obispo High School in 1940, was drafted in June, 1941, and did his basic training at Camp Roberts (Tanaka 1991:103-104). He recalled the irony of San Luis Obispo's anti-Japanese fervor:

> In those basic training days, I was just another American G.I. who received his Army indoctrination and training without fuss or fanfare and without any questions regarding my loyalty to my country, the United States of America.... [After Pearl Harbor] we Japanese Americans (*Nisei*) were suspect purely at face value.
>
> The most lonely years of my life followed—years during which many of my fellow Americans with whom I grew up in San Luis Obispo were no longer ready to accept me as one of them (Tanaka 1991:104).

By the summer of 1941, when Walter Tanaka was in training at Camp Roberts, San Luis Obispo had become a military county. In response to the war in Europe and to Japanese aggression in China and the Pacific, the United States rapidly expanded its armed forces and military facilities. In September, 1940, construction began on Camp Roberts (Davis and Gates 1991:2). Camp San Luis Obispo was expanded at the same time from a National Guard reservation to an Army camp, at which 500,000 men trained (Bailey 1982:83; Gill 1991:37). Both facilities were operating in the summer of 1941. By November, Morro Bay had a naval base, and an observation squadron of the California National Guard was flying out of a new airport at Paso Robles (Bailey 1982:81; Davis 1991:27).

The euphoria of the county's economic boom, fueled by construction and the spending from military payrolls, was tempered by the losses and displacements of wartime. And, unlike the aftermath of World War I, the county did not return to things-as-they-were at the end of World War II. The increased population urged for the county since 1870 began arriving in the 1940s; thousands of men who had trained at Camp Roberts and Camp San Luis Obispo liked the area and returned to settle here (Krieger 1988:104). The City of San Luis Obispo's population jumped from 8,881 in 1940 to 14,180 in 1950 (Curry 1973:45).

Only fifteen percent of San Luis Obispo County's Japanese residents however, returned after the internment (D. and L. Krieger 1991:152). In the south county, "good friends in the valley" had looked after the farms and possessions of their Japanese neighbors, but the returning families were starting back without capital (Krieger 1988:158-159). In 1946, the farmers were able to reactivate the Pismo-Oceano Vegetable Exchange, an agricultural cooperative begun in the 1920s.

Today's County, South of Cuesta Pass

Both the city and county of San Luis Obispo have continued to grow since the postwar years, but much of the county remains rural. Camp Roberts and Camp San Luis Obispo are National Guard training grounds. Part of Camp San Luis Obispo's land and facilities were donated for the establishment of Cuesta College.

Row crops, wheat, cattle, and dairying contribute to the county's economy, as before. Both Arroyo Grande and Nipomo continue as agricultural communities. In 1988, the Pismo-Oceano Vegetable Exchange was growing and shipping "as many as 24 different vegetables a year." The

success of the cooperative was noted as "a living testimony to the dedication, commitment, and hard work of the Japanese farmers in the South County" (Krieger 1988:159).

The cows who furnished their own transportation in the cowboy-automobilist conflict of 1906 would be trucked today on an increasingly enlarged and improved system of highways. Oil pipelines and storage facilities in the county have also multiplied, and are operated with new technologies.

The county's tourist industry has grown beyond expectation. Beach communities are popular, and Hearst Castle, opened to the public in 1958 as Hearst San Simeon State Historical Monument, is one of California's major tourist attractions. Accommodations for travelers cluster on Highways 1 and 101 through the county. The most famous is probably San Luis Obispo's Madonna Inn, "best described as beyond description" (Automobile Club of Southern California 1993:55). The "modern Gothic" of the 1885 Andrews Hotel pales in comparison with the architecture and decoration of the Madonna Inn: "The exterior is a combination of Victorian, Swiss and English Tudor elements carried out with great boulders and pink trim. Inside, imagination has been allowed even greater latitude, with each room decorated in a different style..."(Automobile Club of Southern California 1993:55).

Pismo Beach draws crowds beyond any dreams of John Price, and south of Oceano, off-road vehicles have obliterated all traces of the cabins in the dunes. By contrast, services are still held daily in the Temple of the People at Halcyon, and a resident observed that living there "provides a sense of brotherhood and harmony...she has yet to find anywhere else" (Bondy 1994:20-21).

Cal Poly, designated California Polytechnic State University in 1972, is one of the most sought-after schools in the university system (Krieger 1988:11, 195). From a student body of fifteen on its opening day in 1903, Cal Poly has a current enrollment exceeding the entire population of San Luis Obispo County in 1900.

In the town of San Luis Obispo, Ah Louis's store houses a business and stands as a monument to Chinatown, now a parking lot. The Ah Louis building and Sinsheimer's Store, also in use, remain among the historic structures which evoke downtown San Luis Obispo in the nineteenth century, when the county's foremost need was a larger population.

THE SANTA MARIA VALLEY AREA

Reach 6 of the Branch Canal extends into Santa Barbara County, ending at San Antonio Terrace in the northern portion of Vandenberg Air Force Base. Cultural resource studies south of the terrace were carried out under the direction of the Central Coast Water Authority, and the results of this work will be found in CCWA's reports. Mission La Purisima Concepcion and the ethnography of the Purismeño people are included in these studies. It should be noted here, however, that all three of the ranchos crossed by Reach 6 of the canal (Fig. 6) were on land once utilized by La Purisima.

The Ranchos

Guadalupe

In 1840, Diego Olivera and Teodoro Arellanes were granted the 30,408-acre Guadalupe Rancho, later confirmed at 43,680 acres (Haydon 1917:190). "Right after they received their grant," the partners built an adobe house, the first residence on the west side of the Santa Maria Valley (Carlson 1959:18, 20). Relatives of both Olivera and Arellanes settled in the area of the valley (Carlson 1959:21, 22), and apparently Guadalupe Rancho prospered in the 1840s and 1850s. Bancroft (1886, II:700) wrote of Arellanes, "Don Teodoro was a very large, fine-looking man, of genial temper and gentlemanly manners, locally a kind of ranchero prince."

Todos Santos y San Antonio

William Hartnell was granted the Rancho Todos Santos y San Antonio in 1841. A native of England, Hartnell arrived in California in 1823 as a member of a trading company. He established a home base in Monterey, married Maria Teresa de la Guerra in 1825, and became a Mexican citizen in 1830. He was granted the Alisal Ranch, at present-day Salinas, in 1834; the Alisal became home for the Hartnell family (Bancroft 1886, III:777; Dakin 1949). Hartnell served in various offices for both the Mexican and American governments, the best-known of these positions being that of *Visitador*, or Inspector of the missions, in 1839-1840 (Bancroft 1886, III:777; see the Ranchos, North of Cuesta Pass). Governor Alvarado appointed Hartnell to this post, and the Rancho Todos Santos y San Antonio was given "by Alvarado in appreciation of Hartnell's service as *visitador de misiones*" (Dakin 1949:213-214, 279). With the establishment of American government in California, Hartnell applied for United States citizenship "to secure his land grants made by four Mexican governors," including the grant of the Todos Santos y San Antonio (Dakin 1949:279). His claim to the rancho had apparently been established by 1844, and was "confirmed by all the courts" in the early 1850s (Bancroft 1886, IV:643, 1888, VI:553; Haydon 1917:195). Hartnell died in 1854; the Todos Santos y San Antonio, containing 20,772 acres, was patented in 1876 to his heirs (Dakin 1949:291; Cowan 1977).

Punta de la Laguna

In September, 1843, neophytes of the former Mission La Purisima agreed to give up their rights

to the Rancho Punta de la Laguna in exchange for "a hundred head of cattle made up of fifty young cows of two years of age and fifty young male cattle for killing. Also, 12 partially broken horses..." (Spanish Archives, Expediente 410). The rancho, comprising 26,648 acres, was granted in December, 1844 to Luis Arellanes and Emigdio Ortega, both residents of Santa Barbara (Spanish Archives, Expediente 410; Haydon 1917:192).

Recalling the early days of the Santa Maria Valley, "Old timers said the largest rodeos held in this area were at Punta de la Laguna, between Guadalupe and the present site of the sugar mill. One spring 20,000 cattle were held there" (Carlson 1959:19).

"Here a Drifting Sand, There a Partial Pasture": 1850-1867

American settlement came late to the Santa Maria Valley and its surrounding country. The area remained primarily grazing land in the 1850s, as Gold Rush immigration brought a demand for beef, and greatly inflated cattle prices enriched the rancheros.

William Brewer and his survey crew traveled north from Benjamin Foxen's Rancho Tinaquaic, southeast of the valley, in April, 1861. Brewer described the valley when it seemed one vast ranch:

> Our road wound through some valleys, then struck into the valley of the Santa Maria River. This river is now entirely dry, not a drop of water, its valley a perfectly level plain, with the exception of an occasional terrace or old riverbank, about six or eight miles wide. We struck down and across this valley about ten or twelve miles.... The ride was very tedious as we wound our slow way over the plains, here a drifting sand, there a partial pasture. Nothing relieved the eye; the senses tired with the level scene. The profusion of flowers, beautiful elsewhere, now tired us with their abundance and their sameness; wind filled the air with gray dust, sometimes shutting out the sight of the hills like drifting snow. Lovely green hills lay on each side at the distance of a few miles. Many cattle and horses were feeding on the hills or on the plain. Water every four to six miles in the side canyons was sufficient for them. They seemed mere specks on the plain--a herd of a thousand like a few flies on the floor.... How we hailed the first tree of shade we came to, a fine sycamore on the dry riverbank with fine shade....(Brewer 1974:78).

In the winter of 1861, less than a year after Brewer described his ride across the valley, torrential rains fell on California. The river flooded; cattle drowned on what had been the sandy plain. More disastrous than the floods was the terrible drought of 1863-1864, when whole herds starved (cf. Angel 1883, Cleland 1975).

> There was no tradition of an entire winter without rain. If the usual spring rains came, grass would grow, and some portions of the herds could be saved; but the rains came not. Day after day the sun rose in a brassy sky, that seemed of molten heat, ready to settle down and extinguish all animal and vegetable life.... some [cattle] were saved by feeding them upon the foliage of oaks that were cut down

> for this purpose. Even now, near twenty years later, one may see, from the trunks of the fallen trees and the bleaching bones around, where the last stand was made to save the cattle.... The assessment roll of 1863 showed over 200,000 cattle in Santa Barbara. It is likely that this did not include more than two-thirds of the real number. When the grass started in the winter of 1864-65, less than 5,000 head were alive to be benefited by it (Mason 1883:125).

Many cattlemen, already hard hit by the oversupplied market and falling prices of the late 1850s, were bankrupted by the devastating weather. Benjamin Foxen was apparently able to save his cattle by driving them to the Tulare basin, where some vegetation remained (Carlson 1959:13). Less fortunate, and more typical of the California rancheros, were Diego Olivera and Teodoro Arellanes, grantees of Rancho Guadalupe. By 1867, the rancho belonged to the Estudillo family (Mason 1883:308; Haydon 1917:190; Carlson 1959:33). The Estudillos, in turn, had financial trouble, and portions of the Guadalupe were soon subdivided by their creditors.

The drought ended the era of the great ranchos in the coastal counties. Although stock-raising continued in the Santa Maria Valley, settlers arriving soon after the drought brought not only increased population to the valley, but different uses of the land.

Farms, Towns, and Trains: 1867-1897

The first settler in the Santa Maria Valley was Benjamin Wiley, one of the land-seekers who discovered that government land lay between the valley's rancho boundaries. In 1867, he located a quarter-section north of what is now the town of Santa Maria (Mason 1883:313; Haydon 1917:200). Other settlers soon followed, some bringing stock, but most planning to farm (Carlson 1959:56-100). Reminiscences from the family of Rudolph Cook, who arrived in the valley in 1869 and was one of the four "founding fathers" of the town of Santa Maria, evoke the early days of settlement:

> Those were busy years. The land had to be cleared, plowed and planted. Buildings had to be built and the family fed. There was a time when Rudolph Cook, an excellent hunter, went out into the hills, hunting deer and wild game for the family larder, and gathering wild honey which he sold or bartered for other food and necessities. There was constant dust and wind; coyotes raided the chicken coop; wild horses trampled the crops and ate the young grain; grasshoppers came in clouds to strip the fields; grass fires were a menace to the unprotected frame houses, and there was never enough water. It was hauled in barrels from Suey Crossing until Cook dug a 60-foot well in their own yard. After that they had water, though it had to be pulled up laboriously, hand over hand, in buckets (Carlson 1959:44).

The Cooks were among the early families who contributed to the building of Pleasant Valley School, which opened in 1870 (Carlson 1959:44, 97-98). The population of the valley had grown by that year to include eighty school-age children and sixty under five years of age (Carlson 1959:98).

La Graciosa

The earliest school in the valley, however, is credited to the area's first town, La Graciosa, which was located south of present-day Orcutt. La Graciosa served as a relay stagecoach station as early as 1867; Patrick O'Neil opened a store and saloon in 1868; the village's post office began service in 1872 (Mason 1883:323; Frickstad 1955:171; Carlson 1959:30-31; Tompkins 1982:96). "A voting precinct was established; a townsite was surveyed and 40 lots laid out and put up for sale" (Carlson 1959:31). La Graciosa's residents apparently had assumed that they were building on government land, as were the settlers near present-day Santa Maria. Unfortunately, La Graciosa lay on the Todos Santos y San Antonio grant. Henry M. Newhall, businessman and land baron for whom the southern California town is named, had acquired both Rancho Suey, to the north, and Todos Santos y San Antonio by 1876 (Carlson 1959:31; Dunlap 1982:147). Newhall "served suits of ejectment on all inhabitants, besides claiming $40,000 damages" (*Guadalupe Telegraph*, Jan. 27, 1877, quoted in Carlson 1959:31). The townspeople moved away, and La Graciosa disappeared.

Guadalupe

On the Rancho Guadalupe, John Ward, a son-in-law of the Estudillos (above), arrived in 1867 and began farming (Haydon 1917:190). He built a two-story adobe (Stokes 1965:7), and is credited with construction of the valley's first fences:

> There was no such thing as a fence in this part of the country for a long time. John B. Ward built the first ones. They were made of willow wood and cottonwood, tied together with rawhide. The posts were tied together at the joints and on each side a willow post was thrust into the ground and the 'rail' fastened to it with the rawhide. The rail lengths were about ten feet and the openings in the fence were the thickness of a rail. This was called a 'worm' fence (Diego Villa, quoted in Carlson 1959:21).

Ward's stay on the Guadalupe was short-lived, however. The Estudillos, as noted above, suffered financial reverses, and borrowed against the rancho. In 1870, Theodore LeRoy, a member of the firm which held the mortgage, established ownership (Carlson 1959:33-34; Stokes 1965:7).

LeRoy quickly sold off portions of the rancho, "thus bringing in the first influx of farmers and dairymen," and laid out the town of Guadalupe (Mason 1883:9; Carlson 1959:34). One of the earliest residents was John Dunbar, who arrived in 1871, established a store in 1872, and became postmaster in 1873. He reflects the development of the town in his 1883 business listing: "John Dunbar, Notary Public, Justice of the Peace, Postmaster, and dealer in stationery and toys" (Mason 1883:309-311; Frickstad 1955:171). Guadalupe was described in 1874 as "a wide-awake little village of about 100 dwellings, six stores, one fruit store, two hotels, five saloons, a post office, Wells Fargo & Co.'s Express office, two livery stables, and a blacksmith shop" (Mason 1883:309).

In 1874, farmers from Guadalupe and nearby could haul their produce, chiefly grain, for shipment from the new wharf constructed by C.H. Clark and W.D. Harriman at Point Sal (Mason 1883:298; Carlson 1959:104). The wharf was wrecked during a storm in 1876, but immediately rebuilt (Mason 1883:298) and, despite primitive roads:

> Point Sal soon became a beehive of activity. As many as 120 wagons, pulled by four-, six-, and eight-horse teams, could be seen daily during the grain harvesting season, moving slowly from Valley to Point one day, and coming back the next (Carlson 1959:106).

Clark's wharf went out of business in 1880, when Chute Landing, about two miles to the south, opened for shipping; "freight to San Francisco [was] 50 cents a ton cheaper by this route than by the Point Sal wharf" (Mason 1883:300). A little town, Morrito, sprang up near the landing, with "two or three cottages, several store-houses, a boarding house, and a post office;" there was also a nearby school (Mason 1883:300).

Central City

Central City, present-day Santa Maria, was platted in 1874:

> The land where the corners of four quarter sections, owned by Rudolph D. Cook, John Thornburgh, Isaac Fesler, and Isaac Miller converged became the center of Central City. Each of these men donated strips of land from his adjoining quarter section for the 120-foot wide streets. The townsite map was recorded at the county seat in Santa Barbara in 1875 (Carlson 1959:49).

Main Street, Central City circa 1906. Courtesy of the Santa Maria Valley Historical Society.

The wide streets of Central City-Santa Maria have been a source of pride to the townspeople, as well as the subject of some debate. In 1965, Mayor Vince Pollard summed up differing views:

> There are some interesting theories on the reason for our wide streets. One school holds that they were made wide enough to turn a six or eight horse hitch. Another

> maintains the width was established to retard the spread of fire with which most cities were plagued in the early days. Either, or a combination of both, could be correct but I like to think that those four Pioneers had a great deal of foresight. They realized, as we do today, that a city with broad thoroughfares, preferably tree lined, is a beautiful city (Pollard 1965:15).

Unfortunately, Santa Maria's wide streets did not prevent devastating fires.

Rudolph Cook in 1887 recalled that, when the town was laid out in 1874, the local population consisted of about twelve families and a few unmarried men:

> There were two general merchandise stores in the place, owned by O. Miller and J.M. McElhaney, respectively. The stage passed once daily, bringing the mail and chance passengers; the merchandise, building materials and other necessaries were hauled in wagons from Port Harford; the exports were taken there or to Point Sal to be shipped, the trip to the former port taking four or five days in the rainy season. The coast breeze had uninterrupted sway from the beach to the mountains, its intensity being unbroken by shrub or tree (Rudolph Cook, quoted in Carlson 1959:122).

Central City grew rapidly; and the "uninterrupted sway" of the coastal winds was tempered by the planting of many trees. James Goodwin started a nursery, and in 1879-1880 set out 40,000 eucalyptus. Settlers planted windbreaks of gum trees, cypress, and pepper trees; the downtown streets were lined with eucalyptus and pepper trees (France 1965:18-20.

Santa Maria

On April 22, 1882, the track crew of the Pacific Coast Railway crossed Main Street in Central City, to an impromptu celebration (Best 1964:29). About the time of the railroad's arrival, Central City took the name Santa Maria because "mail meant for this growing town was being sent to Central City, Colorado" (Carlson 1959:117). Providing direct access to shipping at Port Harford and comfortable, fast transportation for residents, the railroad stimulated growth and prosperity in Santa Maria and much of the valley. Among those adversely affected, however, were the owners of Chute Landing and the residents of Morrito. Both places were soon abandoned (Frickstad 1955:171; cf. Carlson 1959:110). Bypassed Guadalupe "lost many of its residents, who moved to the new center of trade" (Haydon 1917:91).

Historian Jesse Mason, visiting the Santa Maria Valley in the fall of 1882, recorded the agricultural wealth of the area and predicted splendid growth. He estimated the valley's population at about 1,300, and noted that "the chief products are wheat, barley, corn, beans, butter, cheese and wool" (Mason 1883:306).

> Approaching Guadalupe through the lower valley of the Santa Maria, one surveys from a single point ten miles square of unbroken grain fields.... (Mason 1883:298).

Mason (1883:310) described Guadalupe as "a bright gem set in the midst of a vast field of purest gold." The population was 300; and there were some twenty dairies near town, mainly operated by Swiss farmers (Mason 1883:310, 312).

Mason observed that the Casmalia Rancho remained primarily grazing land:

> Some cereals are raised, but stock-raising is the principal business, the statistics for March, 1881, being 25 horses, 150 cattle, and 6,000 sheep.... In 1875 an attempt was made to colonize this rancho but it failed (Mason 1883:298).

At Santa Maria, which Mason continued to call Central City, he remarked that the town was already prospering from the new railroad. The population was 350. Mason noticed the trees planted by James Goodwin and sugar beets growing along with other crops. The Methodist Church had been built in town in 1878; and the *Santa Maria Times*, which issued its first edition as the railroad arrived, was being published on the press of the *Guadalupe Telegraph* (Mason 1883:309, 318-320). Mason saluted the town: "Central City is growing like a mushroom in rapidity and like an oak in permanence" (Mason 1883:320).

The town continued to grow, despite two fires which occurred soon after Mason's tribute. Santa Maria's clustered, wooden downtown, like those of many nineteenth-century American villages, was a fire waiting to happen. In September, 1883, fire took one building and damaged others; in May 1884, a larger conflagration burned half of the business section (Storke 1891:113; Carlson 1959:118-120).

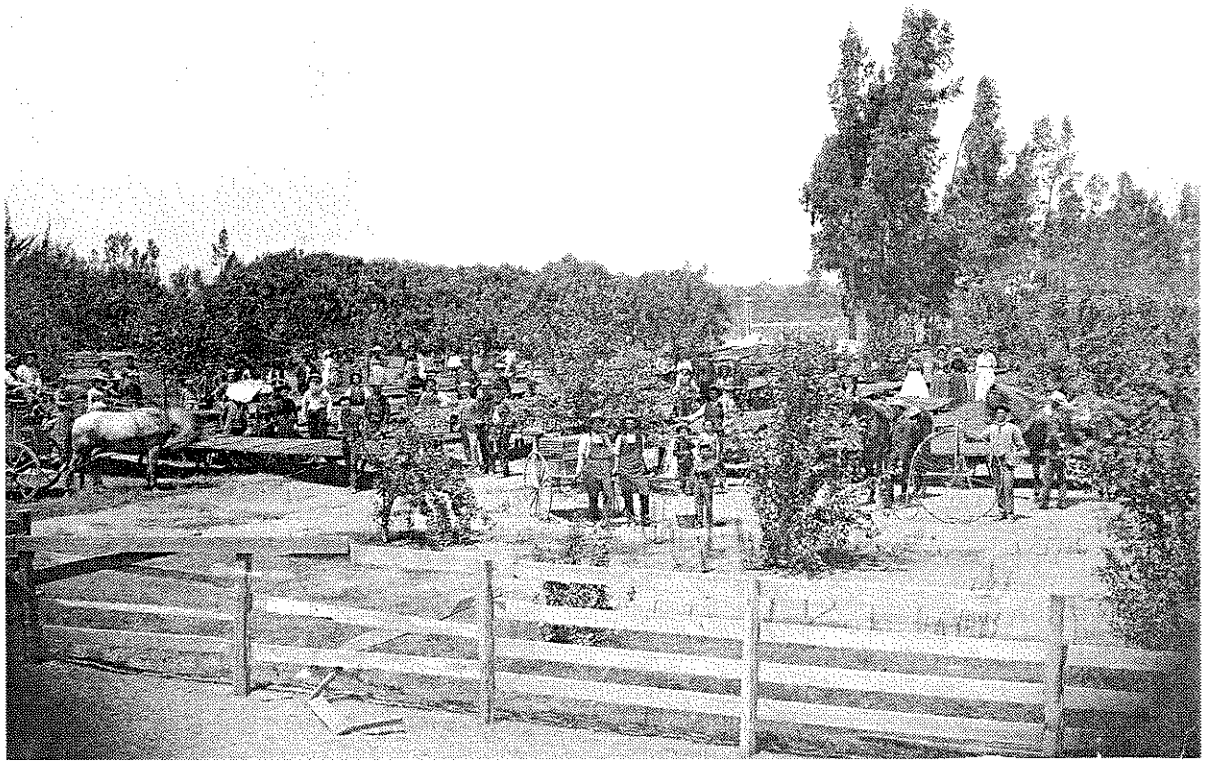
By 1890, the town was rebuilt and developing:

> The chief business thoroughfare is Main Street, 120 feet wide, in which are many substantial business buildings. The town covers an area three-quarters of a mile square....Within one-half mile of the center of the settlement, there is a half-mile race track and a prettily planned park of ten acres (Storke 1891:113).

Orchards and Crops

The people of the valley, as before, were dairy-farming, raising stock, and producing large crops of grain, beans, and potatoes; they were also growing fruit (Storke 1891:114).

> During the 1880's and 1890's there was a general attempt to raise fruit in the Valley and many trees were planted. By 1891 fruit raising was becoming an important industry. Apricots, prunes, and Bartlett pears were the varieties most cultivated....Most of the fruit grown was dried, although in 1891 a cannery was started....(France 1965:20-21). Grover Cleveland had come in for a second term as President of the United States. One of his first acts was to remove the import duty on canned and cured fruits, thereby flooding the market with cheap foreign stuff....There were eighty five canneries on the coast and all closed but one. The Santa Maria Cannery [lasted] to the end of the season (Maulsby 1931:731).



Picking apricots circa 1880. Courtesy of the Santa Maria Valley Historical Society.

In 1889, Thomas Garey, a pioneer nurseryman in the Los Angeles area, organized a land company which bought property on the east side of the valley (Maulsby 1931:69-70). Large orchards were planted around the townsite that bears his name. "A hotel was built; and a blacksmith shop, a store, and the inevitable saloon about completed the town" (Haydon 1917:195). In less than ten years, however, the orchards failed, as did others across the valley:

> While the trees did well the first few years and the fruit produced was of an excellent quality, the orchards succumbed to the dry years of 1897-1898. There was no irrigation at that time to keep them alive, so the trees were eventually pulled (France 1965:21).

After the orchards at Garey were removed, some land was planted to beans, alfalfa, and grain (Haydon 1917:195); by 1905 Union Sugar had leased a large part of the property to grow sugar beets (Best 1964:57).

Beans, still an important crop in the Santa Maria Valley, were cultivated by Portuguese settlers arriving in the 1870s. Unlike the orchards, beans could be dry-farmed (Conrad 1965:5). Their harvesting, like that of many nineteenth-century crops, was labor-intensive:

> A circular canvas, with a diameter up to sixty feet, was spread upon the ground. Distributed over the canvas were piles of the dry bean bushes, which had been hand-pulled in the fields and conveyed to the harvesting area on horse-drawn wagons. In the center of the canvas stood a man with a tie-line attached to as many as three horses. With a whip in one had, he urged the horses to move at a trotting gait, round and round the circle, trampling the bean bushes. In this process the plump, dried bean were released from their pods to fall free upon the canvas, whereupon a force of workers would move in to toss away the bean straw with their pitch forks. This operation left the canvas covered with the beans and considerable chaff. At this point, the workers would gather up the edge of the canvas all around, tossing the canvas and its burden of beans and chaff into the air in order that the prevailing wind would blow away the chaff and leave the beans relatively clean. Returning the canvas and beans to the ground, the workers would then scoop up the beans with wooden shovels sacking the product for transport to market, at which point the beans underwent further cleaning (Conrad 1965:5-6).

The valley's bean crops today are irrigated; their cultivation and harvesting, a long way from the days of the canvas and horses, have been completely mechanized.

In August 1895, the Southern Pacific Railroad, which had reached San Luis Obispo in 1894, arrived in Guadalupe (Nicholson 1980:179, 184,193). Like Santa Maria, which had prospered with the arrival of the Pacific Coast Railway, Guadalupe took on new life as a shipping center. The most important economic development in the valley about this time, however, was the decision of the Union Sugar Company to locate a factory here.

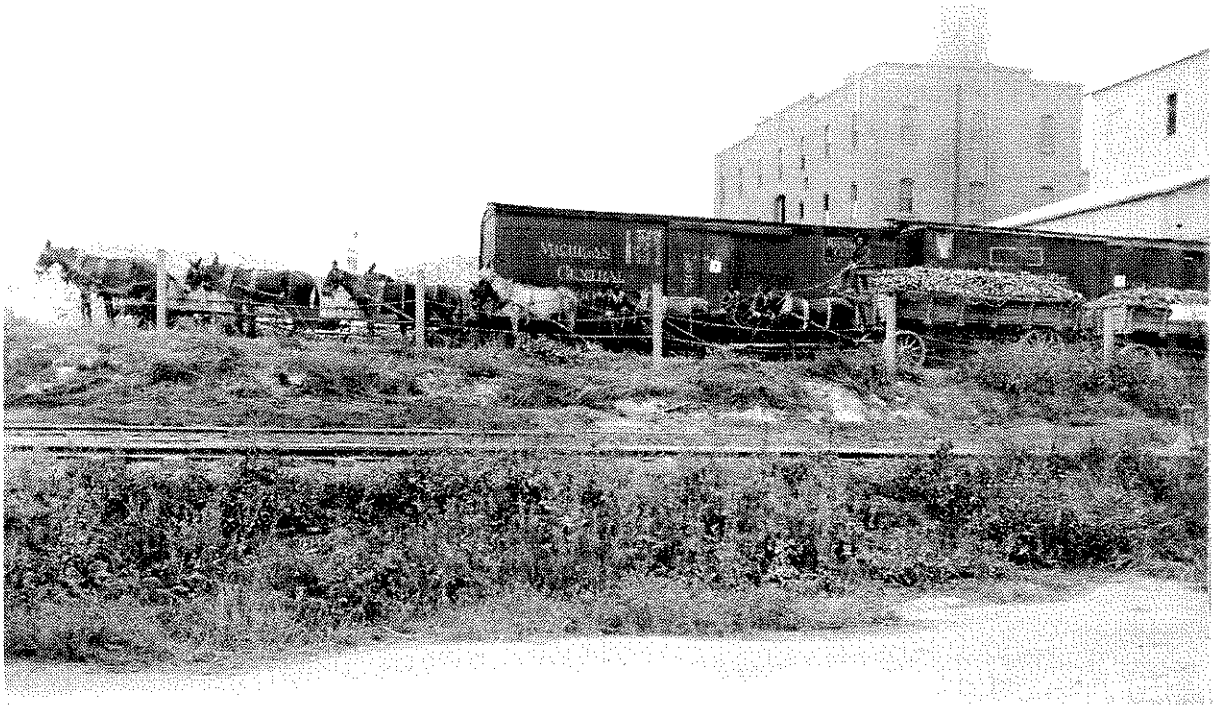
> Requisites for a factory were suitable land in quantity; an abundance of water free from any minerals which might prejudice the crystallization of sugar; fuel in abundance, and good transportation facilities (Carlson 1959:232).

In late 1897, the company acquired a large acreage in the southeastern portion of the Rancho Punta del Laguna, naming the site Betteravia, for the French *betterave*, or sugar beet (Haydon 1917:192; *Santa Barbara News-Press*, Aug. 20, 1950).

New Industries, New Crops: 1898-1941

The Pacific Coast Railway laid a branch line in February 1898 to the site of Union Sugar's factory; the track crew then worked on construction of the building (Best 1964:49). The company contracted with local farmers to grow sugar beets, replacing crops of grain and beans, and drilled artesian wells to irrigate its own newly established beet fields (Haydon 1917:193; Carlson 1959:233). In July 1899, the Southern Pacific Railroad completed a spur from Guadalupe to the factory (Carlson 1959:233).

> In September the company advertised for boys and men to top and harvest sugar beets; actual work of making sugar began September 20, 1899....[on September 29] the first carload of sugar from the local mill was shipped to Kansas City (Carlson 1959:233-234).



Union Sugar Company circa 1900. Courtesy of the Santa Maria Valley Historical Society.

Historian J.M. Guinn reported in 1907 that the company employed 500 men and, "worked up 500 tons of beets per day" during the sugar-making season. The firm provided "a store, shops, and boarding houses at Betteravia" (Guinn 1907:422). By 1917, Betteravia was a complete company town:

> A beautiful row of cottages border the lake and extend one block north....A general merchandise store, which contains almost everything, is operated by the company. They have a non-denominational church building and a splendid clubhouse (Haydon 1917:193).

Union Sugar also built a school for the community (Haydon 1917:193). The town was occupied into the 1960s; as the last residences were being demolished in 1968, a reporter for the *Santa Barbara News-Press* (Mar. 5, 1968) wrote:

> The 'Company Town' idea went out with high-button shoes, but Betteravia went against the pattern until about three years ago, a Union Sugar spokesman said. At that time, the community consisted of 65 housing units, a hotel and a store--all owned by Union Sugar Co. During the three-year phase out, some of the homes were sold and moved out while others were torn down. Yesterday, 15 of the last homes were put to the torch, and this morning, burning of the last three homes will represent the end of all residential living in Betteravia....The housing once

> provided homes for sugar plant workers who now live throughout the Santa Maria Valley area.

Union Sugar's factory brought the valley a major crop with a stable market, higher employment, and expansion in related enterprises, such as shipping. Sugar processing also stimulated the growth of the diatomite industry in nearby Lompoc:

> Materials of unusual purity near Lompoc in Santa Barbara County form the most important commercial deposits in the world: the White Hills....The commercial value of diatomite was not recognized until the late 1880s when a small amount was mined for building stone from the deposits at Lompoc....During the 1900s, only a few hundred tons were mined annually in California, but the material was being tested for use in insulation, filtering, and in refining beet sugar. Beet sugar refining became the foundation of the modern diatomite industry (Burnett 1991:77, 79).

Diatomite from the old Airox mine near Casmalia, in contrast to the material from the White Hills, was used for "high-quality pozzolan and structural lightweight aggregate." The deposit at the Airox mine was petroleum-bearing diatomite (Burnett 1991:79).

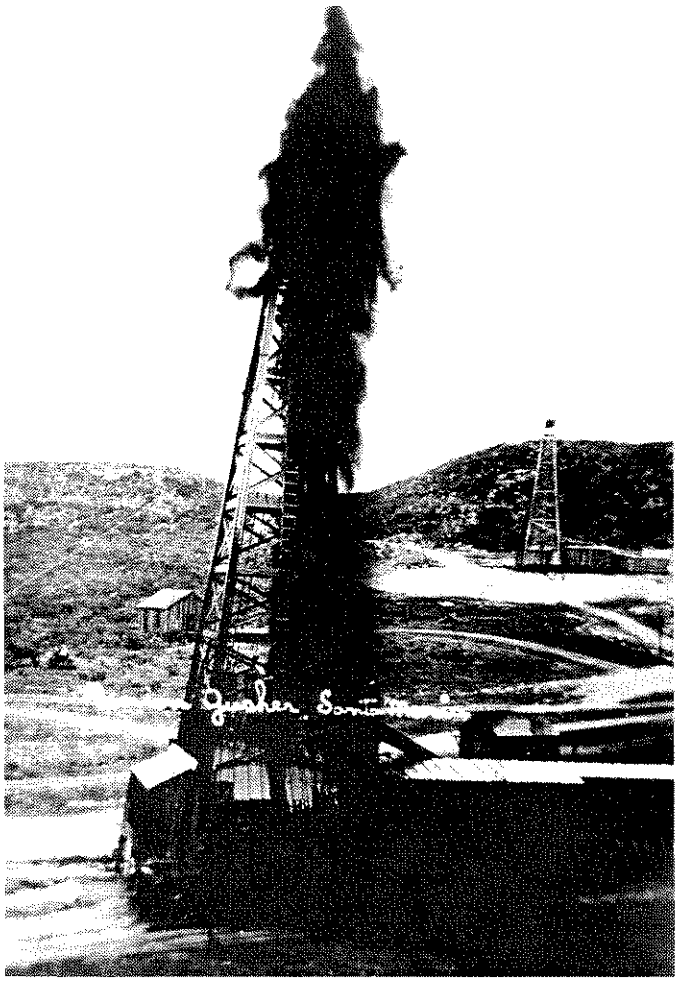
The Oil Boom

Oil prospecting in the Santa Maria Valley began at the turn of the century. The area that became Santa Maria Old Field, near present-day Orcutt, and the surrounding country "were long known to contain seepages of oil or brea" (McLaughlin 1914:396). As California's petroleum industry grew, more companies were formed, and the search for oil-bearing deposits intensified. Orcutt is named for William Orcutt, who went to work for Union Oil in 1899 to establish "the first petroleum-geology department in the West" (Welty and Taylor 1958:86-87).

> Orcutt's early geological-survey parties, the last word in their day, consisted of a spring wagon drawn by two horses broken for saddle, in case the going got too tough for wheels. The wagon carried a grub box, blankets, a Brunton compass, picks, kegs, maps, a bale of hay, a sack of grain, a water bucket, a 10-gallon water keg, and a canvas canteen normally filled with water fortified with something stronger (Welty and Taylor 1958:86).

In 1901, both Western Union Oil and Casmalia Ranch Oil and Development brought in producing wells near Casmalia (Prutzman 1913:341; McLaughlin 1914:396). The oil, however, was "too heavy to be valuable" (Haydon 1917:188); the Casmalia Field was not discovered until 1904 (*California Oil World* 1940:165). Wells drilled in the Santa Maria Old Field in 1901 yielded a good grade of oil (Prutzman 1913:358).

Union Oil, on the advice of the company's geologists, was acquiring leases on thousands of acres in the Santa Maria-Lompoc area (Welty and Taylor 1958:91, 237). In December, 1904, the company brought in the Santa Maria Valley's most famous well, Hartnell #1, nicknamed Old Maud:



Old Maud. Courtesy of the Santa Maria Valley Historical Society.

...on December 2, when no one was expecting much of a well, Old Maud starts rumbling. Then with a roar, a column of oil and gas shoots up through the rig floor to a height of 150 feet. Oil begins pouring down the gullies and creek beds. We have the biggest producer the world had ever seen. We can't control it, what with 12,000 barrels of oil pouring out every day. We don't even have tanks or pipelines big enough to handle the flow, so we scrape up a series of earth dams. Pools of crude collect for miles below as the flow continues day after day for three months (Jack Reed, quoted in Welty and Taylor 1958:97-98).

In its first twenty months, Hartnell #1 produced "upwards of two million barrels, the greater part of which was saved" (Prutzman 1913:360).

The Santa Maria Valley soon "was being literally smothered with oil discoveries" (Best 1964:59). The boom brought oil workers and equipment suppliers, increased construction and commerce. The Southern Pacific Railroad ran a pipeline from its siding at Casmalia to the new town of Orcutt in 1905, as Union Oil and Standard Oil were rushing construction of pipelines from Santa Maria Old Field to Port Harford. Until completion of Union and Standard's pipelines, the equipment of the Pacific Coast Railway was taxed to capacity (Best 1964:53, 57).

Railroads

The Pacific Coast Railway, however, still hauled sugar beets. In 1906, an electrified extension of the narrow gauge was constructed to the beet fields at Garey (Best 1964:57, 59). "Santa Maria, which had become a booming city by this time, began agitation for an electric railway to connect the city with the Southern Pacific at Guadalupe" (Best 1964:59). The first electric interurban train ran from Santa Maria to Guadalupe in April 1909 (Best 1964:61).

In 1911, the continuing oil boom brought a new railroad to the valley. The standard-gauge Santa Maria Valley Railroad was constructed "to handle tank car shipments of petroleum products

originating at the refinery at Roadamite [near Cat Canyon]" (*The Western Railroader* 1954:3). The Pacific Coast Railway quickly extended its eastern track to Palmer, also near Cat Canyon (Best 1964:63). Both lines hauled sugar beets to Betteravia.

The Pacific Coast Railway, despite its competitor, was thriving in 1912, when the line "had an all-time record of 62,319 passengers carried" (Best 1964:63). Santa Maria, which had demanded the popular interurban service, was also thriving:

> ...Santa Maria...dressed in patriotic bunting in readiness for Independence Day....I put up for a day, and found the place very attractive, the model of a progressive Western town; neat, bright, and well ordered....(Chase 1913:139).
>
> Santa Maria, distant about seven miles from the [Santa Maria Old] field, is an active little city of some 3,500 population, and furnishes a large part of the supplies used in the field, other than casing and tools (Prutzman 1913:353).

By 1917, Santa Maria had "three newspapers, two private hospitals, a good fire department, a perfect lighting and power system, natural gas, good telephone and telegraph facilities, and broad, well-paved streets" (Haydon 1917:187).

The Santa Maria Valley Railroad, which hauled only freight, was highly successful at the start. After 1915, however, there were fewer shipments from the refinery at Roadamite, and the owners, an English oil syndicate, apparently neglected management of the line (*The Western Railroader* 1954:3; Best 1964:63). In 1925, the railroad was put up for auction (*The Western Railroader* 1954:3) and was "purchased by G. Allan Hancock, who converted it into one of the country's finest and most prosperous short lines" (Best 1964:69).

Hancock, of the Los Angeles oil and real estate family, "expended enormous energy upon a multitude of enterprises" (Meredith 1965:9). He settled in Santa Maria soon after buying the railroad; his interests in the valley included "scientific farming...an ice company, an airfield, and a flying school which later became Hancock College" (Dunlap 1982:83). He not only grew vegetables, but urged local farmers to practice crop rotation and diversity (*The Western Railroader* 1954:3-4; Best 1964:69).

Although the predominant crops in the valley were sugar beets, barley, and beans, the first railroad cars of iced-down produce had been shipped in 1922 (Carlson 1959:235-236). Also, in 1912 L.D. Waller organized the Waller-Franklin Seed Company at Guadalupe (Haydon 1917:618; Carlson 1959:239). The firm, which grew only flower seeds, began with thirty acres, but had expanded its holdings greatly by the mid-1920s (Carlson 1959:239; Ditmas 1983:117, 153, 155). During the 1930s, the company received national and international awards for its flowers (cf. *Seed World* 1933:164, 1939:272). The firm, now Waller Flowerseeds, continues in business.

Hancock's campaign for the cultivation of more produce in the valley came at an opportune time. Union Sugar closed its factory in 1927, and did not reopen until 1934 (*The Western Railroader* 1954:4). Many farmers turned from sugar beets to fresh vegetables, and "the growing of produce

soon became a major business in Santa Maria Valley" (Carlson 1959:238). Hancock's ventures in the valley prospered; he shipped produce, including his own crops, in cars refrigerated with ice made at his plant, on the tracks of his Santa Maria Valley Railroad (*The Western Railroader* 1954:4; Carlson 1959:237-238; Best 1964:69).

Oil Wells Near Town

In February 1934, before the re-opening of the sugar factory, oil exploration began near Santa Maria. Union Oil leased 2,300 acres, including all of Sections 19, 29, and 30 in Township 10, Range 33, southeast of the city (*California Oil World*, Feb. 1, 1934:2). The first drilling was unsuccessful:

> A production test is in progress at Union Oil Co.'s Moretti No. 1, located on the plain about a mile and a half south of Santa Maria. The Moretti well is the second project drilled by Union in this area. The first, Rice No. 1, was abandoned some months ago, after the hole had been carried to a depth of 2800 ft., and failed to offer much encouragement (*California Oil World*, July 19, 1934).

Union's drilling crews did not hit a good producer until the Spring of 1936:

> Interest this week centers in the outcome of a 24-hour flow test to be made by Union Oil Co. on its Adams No. 1, sec. 24, 10-34, a mile south of Santa Maria in Santa Barbara County. The hole was completed at 2527 ft. with the 8 5/8-inch casing set at 2026 ft. giving 501 ft. of oil-bearing formation. During a brief formation test the well flowed at the rate of 3000 bbls. daily, and the back pressure was sufficient to cause Union to believe the final flow test will yield between 2000 and 3000 bbls. daily (*California Oil World*, April 9, 1936:1).

Although Adams No. 1 was modest in comparison with the Hartnell gusher at Santa Maria Old Field, Union's discovery launched the development of the Santa Maria Valley Field (cf. *California Oil World*, Dec. 10, 1936:29, Dec. 17, 1936:18). Oil is produced in both areas today.

At the time of Union Oil's strike, the demand for oil had been steadily increasing in California; the age of the automobile was firmly established during the 1920s. Buses replaced the Pacific Coast Railway's interurban trolley in 1928 (Best 1964:69). When the Union Sugar Factory reopened in 1934, "trucks were carrying a large part of the beets" (*The Western Railroader* 1954:4). Ironically, the narrow-gauge survived for several years because of "heavy demands by highway contractors for crushed rock and gravel" (Best 1964:69). With few passengers and the loss of freight to trucking, the Pacific Coast Railway went out of business in December 1941; the rails were taken up a month later and sold for scrap (Best 1964:78).

The Santa Maria Valley Railroad, with the advantages of standard-gauge track, Hancock's careful management, and refrigerated cars for valley produce, survived. Although most local goods are now shipped by truck, the railroad remains in business, hauling a variety of freight.

"Huge Machines are at Work Today": 1941 to the Present

In 1941, the United States Army acquired a vast acreage southwest of Santa Maria. The property extended from Point Sal to Jalama Creek and included most of the Rancho Todos Santos y San Antonio. Responding to the war in Europe and to Japanese aggression in China and the Pacific, the federal government was rapidly expanding its armed forces and military facilities. North of the Santa Maria Valley in San Luis Obispo County, thousands of men were in training by the summer of 1941 at newly constructed Camp San Luis Obispo and Camp Roberts.

The coastal base opened on October 5, 1941, and was named Camp Cooke for Major General Philip St. George Cooke, a Civil War hero (*Santa Barbara News-Press*, Oct. 11, 1991:B-4). Some 36,000 men were stationed at the camp during the height of its activity (*Santa Barbara News-Press*, Oct. 19, 1991:A-4).

> Eventually, Camp Cooke housed the 6th, 11th, 13th, and 20th Armored Divisions, the 86th and 97th Infantry Divisions, and the 2nd Filipino Infantry Regiment. By 1944, a prisoner-of-war camp was built to accommodate captured German soldiers and Italian 'co-belligerents' ... The prisoner camp was closed in May 1946 ... In 1945, Camp Cooke officials were also in charge of almost 9,000 inmates at a maximum security Army disciplinary barracks, which later became the Lompoc Federal Penitentiary (*Santa Barbara News-Press*, Oct. 11, 1991:B-4).

The Army stationed and trained 170,000 troops at Camp Cooke between 1941 and the camp's deactivation in June 1946 (*Santa Barbara News-Press*, Oct. 19, 1991:B-4). Camp Cooke was "almost a ghost town" between 1946 and August 1950, when troops began training for the Korean War. The base closed down again in February 1953, and was transferred to the Air Force in 1957, as "the Air Force was developing its intercontinental ballistic missile program and needed a combat-ready missile base" (*Santa Barbara News-Press*, Oct. 11, 1991:B-4, Oct. 19, 1991:A-4).

In December 1957, Santa Maria Journalist Bill Misslin wrote:

> Huge machines are at work today transforming Cooke Air Force Base into a permanent ballistics missile training center, a center that will bring thousands of persons and hundreds of thousands of dollars into this area (*Santa Barbara News-Press*, Dec. 7, 1957:A-1).

The facility, renamed Vandenberg Air Force Base, was dedicated on October 5, 1958 (*Santa Barbara News-Press*, Oct. 5, 1958:1). Vandenberg's effect on the economy of the Santa Maria Valley was more overwhelming than Misslin predicted. An Air Force report in May 1964 tallied monthly spending in Santa Maria and nearby communities as $308,083 by military personnel and $259, 418 by civilians associated with the base (*Santa Barbara News-Press*, May 13, 1964:A-4). By 1966, 40.9% of the Vandenberg work force who resided off-base were living in the Santa Maria area (*Santa Barbara News-Press*, May 17, 1966).

Agriculture continued to be important in the valley, however. In 1961:

> A fast-growing, field-to-freezer vegetable industry here proves that efficient farmers can compete with factories, freeways, and even a gigantic missile base ...the business of growing and freezing lima beans, broccoli, peas and other vegetables [has expanded] to 50 million pounds annually during the past four years. This growth has come in spite of Vandenberg Air Force Bases's rapid development as a missile center, in spite of housing that covers hundred of acres and in spite of a new land-gobbling freeway (*Santa Barbara News-Press*, Nov. 26, 1961:B-5).

The replacement of human and horse labor in nineteenth-century bean harvests by modern machinery is vividly illustrated in the harvesting of fresh lima beans for freezing:

> Harvesting machines called viners comb the field, sometimes day and night, their spike-clustered endless belts gnawing into the long rows of beans. The belts scoop up the entire bean plant and hoist it into a tank. There the pods are beaten until they release the beans. Dropping through a wide-mesh screen that catches the pods, the beans flow down a chute to a bin which, when full, is dumped into a truck for hauling to a freezing plant (*Santa Barbara News-Press*, Nov. 26, 1961:B-5).

Competition for agricultural land came from both aerospace-related firms and other industries. In December 1962, for example, Columbia Records opened its factory at Santa Maria "in the middle of a former bean field" (*Santa Barbara News-Press*, Dec. 12, 1962). Described as "the biggest record manufacturing plant in the western United States" (*Santa Barbara News and Review*, Feb. 28, 1980:16), the factory operated for eighteen years. There were 588 employees on its payroll in 1981 when the plant closed, in response to "a steady decline in demand for record production since 1978" (*Santa Barbara News-Press*, Sept. 6, 1981).

The economy of the Santa Maria Valley and its neighboring areas was increasingly tied to Vandenberg after construction began in 1979 for the 3.5 billion-dollar space shuttle program. "Vandenberg was the major economic contributor to the North County's economy throughout the 1980s", "employment on the base reached a peak of 15,300 workers in 1985" (*Santa Barbara News-Press*, April 18, 1985:A-7, Jan. 23, 1990:A-4). By June 1986, however, the shuttle program was being transferred to Kennedy Space Center. Layoffs followed at Vandenberg, eventually cutting jobs by a third. The work force on the base in 1990 was 10,107 persons (*Santa Barbara News-Press*, June 17, 1986:A-1, July 31, 1986:A-1, Oct. 18, 1986:A-1, Jan. 23, 1987:A-1 Jan. 23, 1990:A-4).

As military spending has been reduced, the Air Force is encouraging private aerospace development at Vandenberg. Major General William E. Jones, commander of the 14th Air Force at the base, told reporters in September 1994: "This kind of arrangement (at Vandenberg) where you have industry, very much profit-motivated, developing new launch vehicles for commercial reasons, is really going to be the forerunner of how we evolve in space over time" (*Santa Barbara News-Press*, Sept. 8, 1994:A-1). In November, "State and local leaders joined military

officials Monday in heralding a $30 million corporate commitment to create a facility for commercial space launches at Vandenberg Air Force Base. ITT Federal Services Corp. joined Lompoc's California Commercial Spaceport Inc. in forming a partnership called Spaceport Systems International....Political and military representatives lauded the partnership as a model of the way in which the Air Force and private enterprise can work together for good" (*Santa Barbara News-Press*, Nov. 29, 1994:A-12).

Of the many changes in the Santa Maria Valley since the 1850s, the economic tie to Vandenberg is particularly remarkable. Santa Maria, with a population of 3,500 in 1912, now is home to over 61,000 people. Little Guadalupe has grown to around 5,500, but the other towns in the valley remain hamlets. Agriculture, grazing, and oil production continue, but are less emphasized than they once were. With the aerospace industry apparently in the area to stay, the people of the valley may one day earn their living not as much from the earth as from the sky.

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ADDENDUM

Salinan and Northern Chumash Ethnogeography in San Luis Obispo and Northern Santa Barbara Counties Elicited from Mexican Land Grant Records by Glenn Farris

ABSTRACT

Piecing together the ethnogeography of the California Indians in the Mission districts has sometimes been made difficult by the fact that very early on whole villages were depopulated by being taken into the missions. In many instances, therefore, we have listings of village names in the mission baptismal registers, but little or no clue as to where the villages actually existed. While preparing ethnohistoric studies for the Coastal Branch project of the Department of Water Resources, I found that the records of Spanish and Mexican land grants on file at the California State Archives were an invaluable source of information. By connecting the clues given in the text of the *expedientes,* as well as the *diseños* associated with them, with archaeological and historic finds, a number of approximate village locations, particularly in the area of the Purisimeño and Obispeño Chumash and the Migueleño Salinan were discovered. Specific examples will be provided of this potential source of valuable information for archaeologists and local historians alike.

INTRODUCTION

It has long been the desire of ethnographers and archaeologists to piece together the locational geography of Indian villages of California, especially at the time of initial contact with whites. The baptismal records of the California missions have been frequently mined for the names of villages which were often recorded as part of the identification of an individual, however, only rarely was the actual location of the village defined. Since the late 19th century, a number of ethnographers have tried to piece together what is termed an "ethnogeography" for various Indian tribes based on the recollections of living individuals. Since the ethnographers were sometimes lucky to find two or three individuals of a given tribe, their specific knowledge of their former geography was often limited to their own villages and near neighbors. Confusion sometimes crept in when a village had moved to another location during the period following missionization.

Ultimately, many of the village names found in the mission registers were left floating, with not even a guess at where it may have actually been. In recent years great advances have been made by people like Jim Bennyhoff (1977), John Johnson (1988), Chester King (1981), Bob Gibson (1983), Randy Milliken (1995)and a number of others. They painstakingly looked at the marital associations of individuals in the early years of the missions and began projecting probable proximity patterns to improve their ability to guess at where villages may have been. Unfortunately, these guesses were only that, except in the unusual occurrence of corroborating data that better defined a site.

LAND GRANT RECORDS

In looking for various sources of information, I decided to re-examine the old Mexican land grant documents for details that might provide useful clues. These documents, preserved at the California State Archives in Sacramento and at the Bancroft Library, Berkeley, are made up of *expedientes* or "proceedings" and *diseños* or maps of the requested land. Most of them are dated to the period between 1833 and 1846, immediately following the secularization of the California missions when the land was appropriated by the civil authority and dispensed to various claimants, some former mission Indians, but the vast majority to Mexican citizens living in California.

Because the *diseños* have been fairly accessible and are generally straightforward documents, they have often been used with good results. However, in my research, I found that the details provided in the *expedientes* had often been passed over. In most of the *expedientes* there is a document in which an official (*juez de Campo,* or land judge) would accompany the claimant and usually representatives of neighboring ranchos to lay out the boundaries. A pair of horsemen using *a cordel* (a rope 50 *varas* or 137.5 feet in length) would measure out the land. As their movements over the land were described, the *juez de Campo* would often mention placenames along the way. I first noticed that many of these placenames no longer appear on modern maps, and in many instances had been long forgotten. In some cases, I was gratified to find the place names to match some of the "floating" village names from the mission records. It appeared that many areas still retained the village names three, four or more decades after the people had been removed to the missions in the program known as *reducci\n.* Reflecting on how this knowledge would have been retained, one has only to consider that the *vaqueros* who would have acted as the riders, were often former mission Indian neophytes, or Mexicans who had become thoroughly familiar with the land while riding herd and working with Indian *vaqueros.*

EXAMPLES DRAWN FROM THE COASTAL BRANCH PROJECT

In order to demonstrate the value of these documents, I will provide a few examples of village names drawn from the Coastal Branch project. The ones I have chosen for this paper are the villages of Cholame, Tisagues, Camate, Huer-huero, Sataoyo, L'Huegue, Stemectatimi and Lospe.

Cholame and Tisaizues

Cholame was reputed to be one of the largest of the Migueleño villages, with about 400 people baptized mainly at Mission San Miguel, being attributed to it. The Cholame valley running north from near the confluence of highways 41 and 46 toward Parkfield at the head of the valley was certainly the area occupied by the people associated with this "village." It is probable that there was not a single village, but a series of smaller hamlets spread out along the course of Cholame Creek. This part of the country is notably dry and people must rely on disparate water sources, some springs and some creeks, that appear infrequently through the landscape. However, one of the earliest mentions of Cholame (ca. 1803) describes the chief as being over several villages (Cook 1960:243).

Identifying the exact location of the head village of Cholame is difficult. Larson and Coombes (1988:43) concurred with Thomas Hester's (1978:501) placement of Cholame as being at the place name on Route 46 where the James Dean Memorial and Jack Ranch restaurant are currently found. The fact that this location is actually outside of the area encompassed by the Rancho de Cholame land grant provided an initial caution about placement of the village of Cholame in this spot.

In 1844 a land grant was made by Governor Micheltorena to Mauricio Gonzales containing six square leagues *(sitios de ganado)* of land at the place called "Cholamen" (sic) (Spanish Archives n.d.: Reel 978895, Vol. 4, Pp. 386-388). A diseño was prepared which gives a schematic portrayal of the property showing two roads entering it from the west then joining into one which departed to the east (Spanish Archives n.d. Roll 978898, Vol. 2, pg. 35). The main road is identified as *(caminos para la cyerra* [sic]). The aberrant spelling, "cyerra" (or sierra), in this case is repeated in an identical spelling on the mountains to the east of the rancho. On the southeastern border of the grant map is written the word Techague. This word seems to coincide with the name of a second major village in Migueleño territory, *Tisagues.* Its placement on the map was said to be misleading in its apparent proximity to the place known as Cholame. Indeed, as part of the official proceedings there is a statement by Don José Mariano Bonilla, grantee of the Huer Huero Rancho northeast of Santa Margarita, dated January 31, 1844. In it Bonilla said that from his personal knowledge of the land claim, the map was in error and that the place known as Techague was six leagues (ca. 15 miles) away and should not be considered part of the grant (Spanish Archives n.d.: Roll 978895, Vol. 4, pg. 386). When seen in light of comments by Salinan consultant Maria de los Angeles (to linguist John P. Harrington) that Tisagues (also, *Thizahuex, tre cúwec)* was "From the Cholam store, she says, 'ay es, es allá onde (sic, donde) entramos la tienda'" (Harrington n.d.:3); "over there where we entered the [Cholame] store" and "same place as Cholame, where they used to drink water--possibly located near Highway 46 near old Cholame store" (Gibson 1983:244), Bonilla's statement falls into place. If one were to accept the area of Parkfield as being the actual location of the village and place of Cholame, the information fits together pretty well since Parkfield is approximately 15 miles up the Cholame Valley from the Cholame store. The actual placement of the grant boundaries on later surveyors' maps shows the Cholame ranch extending south across current road 41/46, although the current geographical spot known as Cholame is not included. However, neither is the area of Parkfield included in the grant. In a statement dated September 12, 1851, found in the land grant records (Cholan Rancho, S.D. 71:16) Mauricio Gonzales signed over all the rights, title, interest and claims "to the lands and Rancho known by the name of Cholan [sic] and of Teasque [sic], the same being situated in the county of San Luis Obispo...". This would indicate that Mauricio Gonzalez understood the grant to extend into the territory known as Tisagues.

The land description in the *Expediente* for the Cholam grant includes mention of a spring *(ojo de agua)* in the cañada (Spanish Archives n.d.: Roll 978895, Vol. 4, pg. 387) as forming the northern boundary. On close examination of the Cholame Valley, it would appear most likely that this spring might well be at the headquarters of the Cholame Ranch (Jack Ranch), while the actual Indian village of Cholam might well have been up near Parkfield.

These documents also give the distance from Mission San Miguel to Cholame, however, in one the distance is shown as 10 leagues and in the other as 12 leagues. Bancroft (1886:150) gives the

figure of 14 leagues, presumably based on the original report of the 1804 military action against the chief of Cholame. The interpretation of a league is somewhat uncertain. It had a literal equivalence of 5000 varas (a vara being 33 inches) and thus is generally calculated at 2.6 miles. The main route from the town (and mission) of San Miguel to Parkfield today is via Vineyard Canyon Road. This leads northeast from San Miguel and is a distance of some 26 miles. This would be well within the range of the 10- 12 leagues figure as well as being consistent with the statement by Mauricio Gonzales that Cholame was "situated to the north of the mission of San Miguel, at a distance of ten leagues from said mission" (Spanish Archives n.d.: Roll 978895, Vol. 4, pg. 386). The diseño clearly shows two roads crossing the mountains (not passing through valleys) to reach the area of Cholame. These could well have been Vineyard Canyon Road and possibly Ranchita Canyon Road, although several other trails still exist across these hills to reach into the upper Cholame valley. In turn, the roads join in the valley and together lead out toward the east. This passage is perhaps the one that leads over the southern portion of Table mountain toward Lovel Canyon in upper Sunflower Valley on the way to Tulare Lake and the major village of Bubal (or Wowol) in the vicinity of today's Kettleman City. Cholame Pass was mentioned as the passage into the central valley on several of the expeditions seeking runaway neophytes in the San Joaquin Valley. One of these expeditions, that of Juan Ortega in 1815, specifically mentions stopping at the place known as Cholame before continuing into the valley (Cook 1960:267). If it was indeed up near Parkfield, it would seem more likely that they would proceed directly across the nearest pass rather than drop down to Cottonwood Pass (where Route 41 currently cuts through the mountains).

The Cholame Valley is well recognized for being seismically active. Maria de los Angeles, a prominent Migueleño consultant to both J. Alden Mason and John Harrington is quoted as describing a earthquake remembered from her childhood:

> When I was a child there was an earthquake; the earth shook and the ground cracked in Cholam. We were frightened and thought that the end of the world had come.... The fish came out of the ground; it was a great earthquake. The oak trees bent to the earth and the people were frightened and fell on their faces and prayed (Mason 1918:120).

It should be noted that in the original Migueleño text taken down by Mason, the word "Cholam" does not appear. Instead there is the compound word *umticu*$^{(w)}$ *ec* (Mason 1918:120) which is translated "at Cholam". The *um* part is a preposition (at) leaving *ticu*$^{(w)}$ *ec*. This is certainly related to Tisagues and bears out Harrington's later notes that Maria de Los Angeles had associated Tisagues with the Cholam Store (post-office).

Betty Rivers (Rivers and Jones 1993:155) has stated that this was almost certainly the major earthquake of January 9, 1857. Maria de los Angeles is shown to be 8 years old in 1860 (U.S. Census, San Luis Obispo County 1860), living with her father, Anisimo (Enismo or Onesimo), next door to an Indian couple named Pasqual and Gregoria. These were her father's parents, Pasqual Baylon Bravo and his wife, Gregoria. Pasqual was referred to as "Captain Pasqual" in the notes of an 1858 land survey in the vicinity of the Estrella Ranch. The 1852 Census (California Census, San Luis Obispo, 1852) shows a Pasqual as "former captain" with his wife Gregoria, Onesimo, Onesimo's wife, Paula, and their son José de los Reyes. The San Miguel

Mission baptismal record 2899 shows Maria de los Angeles as being baptized on August 6, 1853 recently born four days before.

Tisagues (Techague), is also believed to have been on the border with the Northern Chumash due to its extensive kinship ties not only to Cholame, but to a number of Chumash rancherias to the west and Yokuts rancherias to the east (Gibson 1983:104; map 7). If it were in the vicinity of the Cholame store on Route 46, it would indeed appear to have been well positioned to interact toward the east (through Cottonwood and Polonio passes), southward through the San Juan Creek valley toward the Carrizo Plain, and west toward Creston and Santa Margarita.

Mason (1912:106-107) discussed various villages including Cholame. However, the information presented is confusing because sometimes the village is identified as being adjacent to the Mission of San Miguel and at other times some distance away. Alfred Kroeber (1925:547) provides a reasoned discussion of the confusion over the location of the village of Cholame:

> Cholame, the most important town of the San Miguel division [of Salinans], is stated by some to have been situated at that mission, by others on Cholame Creek. As the Cholame land grant lies along this creek, and the Spaniards and Mexicans were rather precise in their application of native names, the latter vicinity seems more likely. But Estrella Creek, as the lower course of Cholame Creek is now designated on maps, flows into the Salinas near the mission; and as it is the general custom of the California Indians to name streams after the sites at their mouths, the name may in this way have been, correctly enough, carried upstream by the Spaniards. Conjecture, however, is all that is possible on such disputed points. The majority of Salinan towns of ascertained location lie on San Antonio and Nacimiento Rivers. In part, this unevenness may be the fault of the preservation of knowledge; but it seems also to reflect the preponderating distribution. Even in the barren hills of the Cholame drainage there are known as many villages as in the long valley of the Salinas proper.

Considerations of the name "Cholame"

In view of the notable presence of *Pinus sabiniana* (gray pine) in the hills of the upper Cholame Valley (Thomason 1988:2), the possibility that the word Cholame derived from the word for this species of pine cone, *Cho' (or vo)'* (Cf. Merriam 1979:112; Turner 1980:80) plus the verb form for "eat" *(lam)* (Mason 1918:143) was explored. The area of Parkfield, in particular, has an abundance of this species of pine (Cf. also, Baldwin 1971:26) which was known to produce a much sought-after food (Farris 1982:31-33, 67; 1993). It is not uncommon for Indian place names to reflect the availability of water or certain foodstuffs (Applegate 1974:193-194). Alternatively, Frank Latta (1977:263) suggested that Cholame was a Yokuts-related Salinan word which was originally Cholumne. However, Katherine Turner (personal communication, 1993) states that the term is an Antoniano word which may mean either "proud" or "rude". The Cholame people were referred to in this disrespectful manner by their neighbors (K. Turner, personal communication 1993). Maria de los Angeles (born ca. 1850) said that the name *tc'ola'm* was the "name of the people of the place: means people very bad, no belief in God or

anything" (J.P. Harrington quoted in Gibson 1983:239). The close marriage relations noted by Gibson of the Cholame village to other Migueleño Salinan villages as well as to two Northern Chumash villages as opposed to the lack of intermarriage with the Antoniaño Salinans (Gibson 1983:1 10) would buttress this image of the Cholame people being proud and aloof toward the latter group. Tumer's claim that the word Cholame refers to a proud people does not address the actual etymology of the word, any more than our understanding of the European tribal name "Vandal" reflect on its original meaning.

Camate

Another rancho whose northern edge is probably crossed by the pipeline on the way to Shandon was the San Juan Capistrano del Camate (a.k.a. San Juan Capistrano y El Camate, San José y Camate and Camate y San José) ranch. An additional misspelling that comes up from time to time is "Camote". However, the preponderance of evidence shows that Camate is the correct term. This land grant of 10 square leagues *(sitios de ganado mayor)* was granted to Tomas Herrera and Geronimo Quintana on July 11, 1846 by Mexican Governor Pio Pico (Spanish Archives V. 6, pp. 199-201), but was never confirmed by the U.S. Land Grant Commission and so does not appear on the maps prepared by the General Land Office. The name Camate is of interest to us because it is the name of an Indian village (Engelhardt 1929:58). A woman baptized at the Mission of San Miguel (SMB 1001) is shown to have come from Camate. The name lingers now in the bastardized spelling of Camatta Canyon. This rancho, under the name Camate y San José, is shown to form the eastern border of the Huer-Huero ranch (Spanish Archives, Expediente 506, see diseño). Migueleño-speaker Maria de los Angeles provided the word Camote, shown by Harrington as "*k'ámɑ-te*, It is in the *valle el sur* to the south. Knew there were paisanos working at the rancho there" (Craig 1980:6). Although recognized as a place name by Maria de los Angeles, there is no evidence that it was a Migueleño word. Very likely it was Obispeño Chumash. From its location it is most likely either an Obispeño or a border village between the Migueleño Salinan and the Obispeño Chumash. A likely location for the main village may be the site of the Camatta Ranch in Camatta Canyon in T29S/Rl6E, section 5 where a number of house pits have been recorded as CA-SLO-328 (Bob Gibson, personal communication, 1993). The other part of the name of the land grant, San Juan Capistrano, is undoubtedly retained in the name of a major stream in the area, the San Juan, which flows into the Estrella River from the south. San Juan Valley lies to the east of Camatta Canyon. The two join on their northern ends in T27S, R15E, Sections 2, 3, 10 and 11. The full extent of the grant is difficult to determine because no map *(diseño)* was ever made of it and the text of the grant merely states that it is found "at the edge of the tulares" (Spanish Archives, Vol. 6, pp. 199-201).

L'huegue *(Legüheje, Elewexe)*

Gibson (1983:262-263) generally follows the statement by Rosario Cooper to Harrington that "*elewexe*" was a ranch near Paso Robles (Klar 1977:52). Details of the boundaries for the Paso de Robles land grant (Spanish Archives, Expediente 275) state that the western boundary of the grant was a place called *Legiieje.* Harrington also stated that "Loweixe, leweiwe -- [was the] ranch of Juan de los Reyes, back of Paso Robles. In a separate item was stated: "Dave [Mora]

and his brother once walked to El Rancho de los Reyes. Just s. of the cement bridge that is 2 m s. of Templeton on the highway. They went up past the house that is on the hill and climbed through *monte* and descended to the ranch of Juan de los Reyes in a narrow cañada in the hills, was near where El Tecolote is but the cañada at Juan de los Reyes' ranch drains to the coast, not to the Salinas River. Juan de los Reyes talked Migueleño (Harrington 1930) [probably refers to Toro Creek area]" (Gibson 1983:262-263).

"Huehuero, My Camp in the Mountains," 1851, June 4, William Rich Hutton. Courtesy of the Huntington Library.

El Huer-Huero Land Grant

The name "huer-huero" is of confusing origin. Bancroft thought that it should really have been "huerfano" (orphan). The possibility that it derived from the term "huero" (blond or light-haired person) has been suggested, though the geminated form makes no sense. Linguist Katherine Turner has stated that it meant "flute" or "windpipe" in the somewhat bastardized Spanish derived by John P. Harrington from his Salinan informants. In this case she shows it as being spelled "el huerh/buero". The word does not seem to derive from the California Indian languages of the area (Salinan, Yokuts or Northern Chumash). On the other hand, there is a Nahuatl place name form, *huehue* that means "the ancient one" and in Mexico often is linked to the god of fire, *Huehuetéotl* (Ordoño and Peñafiel 1978:60,117). A number of Nahuatl terms and placenames seem to have found their way into Mexican Spanish, especially as used on the California frontier (Cf. "*tequesquite*", discussed below). Since the name of the rancho was expressed as "El huer-huero" (or even "El Hue-huero") this reconstruction of the meaning seems to have merit.

Just north of the town of Creston, in the valley where the branches of Huer-huero Creek have joined, is a spot called the "*Cañada del Tequesquite*", near a high hill called "D. [Don] Dabid [David ?]. This canyon is alternately called the "*Cañada del Aguagito*" in a contemporary survey. The word "*tequesquite*" is derived from Nahuatl, *tequixquitl,* and is translated as meaning "a naturally occurring efflorescent carbonate of soda used in laundry" (Karttunen 1983:233). There is a land grant in San Benito and Santa Clara County called the "*Llano de Tequesquite*", what we might call "Soda Flats."

Another place name given is the *Agua de los Codornices* which is today known by its translation, Quail Water Creek. This is intriguing since it appears it could well derive from an Indian term for the same place.

While reconstructing the area laid out for the Huer-huero land grant using the original Expediente records, it became apparent that the area later laid out as being the Huerhuero grant is much smaller than the one granted in the Mexican land grant. For instance, Quail Water Creek is considerably east of the area designated on the current maps as being part of the Huerhuero grant. One item I noticed in attempting to follow the movements of the Mexican surveyors was that whereas in the Spanish text there is a distance shown as 130 *(ciento y treinta cordeles [a cordel* was 50 varas or 137.5 feet]), in the official English translation this figure appears as only 30 cordels.

Sataoyo

The village of Sataoyo appears in about 50 mission baptismal records including eight from San Miguel and 42 from San Luis Obispo (Gibson 1983:254). Because of a comment in the record of a woman in 1812 baptized "in danger of death" (Ysabel, SMB 1609, July 8, 1812) that she was baptized "at El Rancho de San Simeon... native of Stajahuoio", it was presumed by Gibson (1983:254) and Farris (1986:84) that the village was located at San Simeon. This was tenuous evidence because it is known that people were mentioned in the records as being baptized in a certain village, but a native of another one.

An alternative location for Sataoyo has come to light in the confirmation of the land grant for the Rancho Santa Margarita to Joaquin Estrada in 1841 by Governor Jimeno. Jimeno, in outlining the boundaries of the rancho states that the northern boundary is formed by a place known as *Satagolla.* Later, in 1858 when a survey of the land in the vicinity of Rancho Santa Margarita was drawn up by the General Land Office (Brice 1858), at the northern boundary of the Santa Margarita ranch is "the Satagolla or Salinas River." It follows a bend in the Salinas River which curves around some high hills in T29S, R13E, Mount Diablo B & M., sections 4, 5, and 10, and T28S, R13E, Section 32. This area fits the description in the land grant record, "*arroyo y cañada que se nombra de Satagolla.*" When one then looks closely at the internal evidence of the baptismal records for people said to be from Sataoyo, the marriage ties are distinctly inland villages of the Northern Chumash. To place Sataoyo out on the coast made it necessary to argue that the marriage links were due to a valued inland-coastal connection. Though a plausible hypothesis, the likelihood of closer marriage connections is more so.

Chester King (1982) had suggested that there might be two different villages, Sata Oyo and Stajahuoyo. As noted above, the identification of Sataoyo being at Rancho San Simeon was based on the single comment that a woman (Ysabel) had been baptized at the rancho and was from Stajahuoyo. However, there is a separate mention of "Stajahuoyo, hacia el pinar" (SLO B 1792, May 23, 1803, Lucia). In the baptismal record of Ysabel (SM B 1609, July 8, 1812) there is the further mention that she was the grandmother of Juachin Borica (SM B 284). In tracing down this clue it was found that Juachin Borica was the son of Thadeo Borica (SLO B) and Ynez. In tracing further it was found that Thadeo was born in a village identified as ----. A close approximation of this word appears as a Salinan word in a Harrington interview with Maria de los Angeles and is identified to mean "Cambria pine." In sum, there were two distinct villages being discussed, Stajahuoyo near Cambria and Sata Oyo near the southern end of Atascadero.

Stemectatimi

On April 14, 1835, William Dana applied for land and was awarded the grant of the Nipomo Ranch of 37,887 acres (Spanish Archives, Expediente 25). He was actually awarded the land by Governor Alvarado on April 6, 1837 (Nipoma Grant, 13 SD:40). Dana did not actually occupy the property until 1839 (Dana 1960:16). The name of the rancho is a corruption of the Chumash word, *Nipumu'*, meaning "village" (Klar 1977:53). However, in a story told by Juan Francisco Dana, the accepted meaning had been "foot of the hills." But then he related a story in which this gloss of the word was corrected by a local Indian who overheard the description and stated emphatically,

> *"Señora, no es Nipomo - es Ni-po-mah."* Then, with a long motion of his arm he pointed to the valley below us. He lifted and lowered his arm seeming to indicate the rising hills then with a quick stamp of his foot he again exclaimed: "Ni-po-mah" (Dana 1960:96-97; Norton 1968:32).

Given the geography of the area, it may well have been that he was indicating the rolling hills rising to the northeast until they came to the Temettate Ridge and then plunging sharply into the upper reaches of Los Berros and Temettate Creeks (see USGS Nipomo 7.5' Quad Sheet). Possible support for this idea comes from Applegate (1974:198) wherein he mentions that the Purisimeño word *?anipomo,* meaning "promontory" may be an alternate derivation of Nipomo.

The property was described as

> bordering the village [pueblo] of Los Verros of La Purisima, [Nipomo] is 11 leagues distant from the pueblo and eight from the mission of San Luis Obispo, in the last sitio belonging to this pueblo of Los Verros and is the border of the lands of the aforementioned pueblo on the north.
>
> The borders of the sitio of Nipomo are the following: the canyon of Suez on the southeast, the sandy ground of the Santa Maria Creek on the southwest, the creek and canyon of Gematali [Tematate ?] on the northwest, and the dead hills,

> borders of San Luis [Obispo lands] on the northeast. The length of this sitio is two leagues more or less, and the width is half a league, with hills around of dead lands and others covered with chamise as shown on the accompanying diseño (Spanish Archives, Expediente 25).

This reference to a bordering village of Los Verros is intriguing in that it suggests that the place name on Los Berros Creek may well have carried over from the initial period of exploration. Alonso Dana (1969:34) stated that many Indian burials had been found during construction of a Union Oil Company pumping plant in the early 1900s. He suggested that this may have been the site of a village, but it is uncertain whether it was historic or not. From the 1840s to about 1870, the name for Los Berros Creek continued to be Temettate (or some form of this name). Since Stemectatimi is the only village associated with Los Berros Creek, it is tempting to believe that Indians originally from this area, having left the missions at the time of secularization, may have settled in a village (pueblo) on lower Los Berros Creek and that this is what was being called Los Verros in the Nipomo land grant expediente. The creek on this map is called Arroyo Temillelee or possibly Temittetee. This coincides with the 1860 Bolsa de Chamisal land grant survey map which also gives this name for the Los Berros Creek area. In addition, the statement in the Expediente for Rancho Nipoma that the northwest boundary of the rancho was formed by the Arroyo "Gematali" (Spanish Archives, Expediente 25). More intensive research into the histories of the Indian people who worked on the Nipomo and the Bolsa de Chamisal Ranchos may help define this hypothesis.

Lospe

The Guadalupe Rancho, another former rancho of Mission la Purisima, was requested by Diego Olivera and Teodoro Arellanes on March 8, 1837. The description of the borders of the rancho are given as:

> bordering on La Laguna next to the Lomas de Azufre (Sulphur hills), and with the Seno de Lospe (cavity or ridge [?] of Lospe) (Spanish Archives, Expediente 138).

This statement is intriguing because Lospe is the name of one of the Purisime-no villages. King (1984: 1-29) locates it at the mouth of Shuman Canyon based on statements by Schumacher and Harrington. However, the mention of the name in the land grant document for Rancho Guadalupe coincides with the place names on the Guadalupe USGS quad of two heights called Mt. Lospe and Lospe North. It is possible that these two hilltops were seen as the "Seno de Lospe".

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

Unfortunately, not enough archaeological survey in many of the prime locations for the rancheria sites has been done. Several sites have been located that may relate to certain sites. It would be critical to get samples of datable beads from the various possible site locations to place them in context, whether late 1700s or early 1800s.

Cholame

A number of artifacts have been found by avocational collectors in the vicinity of the present Parkfield (Thomason 1988:5) as seen in the following quotation:

> It is also known, that the Indians from the San Joaquin Valley, would make treks now and then to the shores of the Pacific Ocean. The easy route for them would be via Jacalitos Canyon and through the Mustang. From studying the terrain all my life, my own belief is that the majority of Indians here from time to time, were a sub-tribe of the Yokuts, called Tachi. One of the main Indian villages on the west side of the San Joaquin Valley, presumed inhabited by Tachi, was located near Avenal, which is not too far from the north foot of the Diablo Range.
>
> Probably the three [artifacts], of many, which have brought me the greatest joy in finding, are the following: in January of 1983, after looking a lifetime, I found an Indian bowl in the Joaquin Creek, on our ranch. I was so elated that I carried it home in my arms, despite its weight. What a prize! The next artifact was found on a neighbor's ranch. It had been raining heavily, and as I was walking along, my eye fell on an object lying in water in the track left by a large bull. I quickly fetched it up and, with my fingers, shoved the mud out of a groove in the middle of the stone. Sure enough, it was just what I had thought it was, a beautiful specimen of a shaft straightener, complete with Yokuts markings. On another day, I was walking along a roadway just after a road grader had passed by. Suddenly, my eyes saw a strange sight. Squatting down for a closer look, I saw part of a reddish stone with holes in it. With my pick-hammer I unloosed it from the compacted soil that held it fast. It had a heavy coat of iron ore, or hemotite (sic), covering the entire surface. Scraping the ore off I discovered the mystery stone had 170 small holes drilled in it, and a larger counter sunk hole drilled on one end. It was about the size of a chicken egg. To this day, no one has been able to tell me what it is, but it is generally believed to be a shaman's stone.

Tisagues

Although Maria de los Angeles identified the Cholame Store area as being Tisagues, no sites have been recorded there. To the west about a mile and an eighth along Cholame Creek is the Bitterwater Road site that does appear to have been a village location.

Camate

Archaeological site SLO-328 was reported to have four large house pit rings, about 30 feet in diameter. Some limited excavation was done in the center of at least one of the pits with only a few chert flakes found. This site is in T29S, R16 E, Section 5, about a ¼ mile above (north) of the Camatta Ranch house.

Pat Finerty is reported to have excavated a housepit at Camatta Ranch in the 1950s. Glass beads were found at the site (Bob Gibson, personal communication 1993).

Lhuegue

Two archaeological sites are of sufficient size and appropriate location to be possible candidates for Lhuegue. These are SLO-487 (Dills 1969a) and SLO-488 (Dills 1969b) and are located on the York Mountain 7.5' USGS Quad sheet. The latter site seems to be a particularly good candidate because of its considerable size. It was described as being "100 yards by 1/3 of a mile." It borders on Paso Robles Creek and is approximately 3 1/2 miles west of Templeton. Twenty-two projectile points were surface collected from the site during its recording as well as one stone bead. It was noted to be a "thoroughly lived-in village site" with an extensive area of shell and stone artifacts. It and the neighboring site, (SLO-487) are in the area of the western (actually Southwestern) portion of the Paso Robles grant, adjacent to the neighboring Rancho Asuncion grant. This second site was termed an "extensive village" (Dills 1969a). A large quantity of shellfish remains typical of the Morro Bay-Cayucos area were found on SLO-487 as well as a triangular chert projectile point.

El Huer-Huero

Gibson has identified a village site with burials just south of Creston near Silver Lake that may coincide with the Laguna del Indio in the Huerhuero Land Grant records. He identifies it as SLO-700 and dates it to ca. AD 1500-1800 (Gibson 1984b:3) based on bead and projectile point styles. One prominent feature of the site was a large housepit ring with a minimum diameter of 30 feet and a maximum outer diameter in excess of 50 feet (Gibson 1984a:5). In his initial survey of the site Gibson (1984a:7-8) suggests that it may have been the site of one of the Indian rancherias mentioned in the mission records. He hypothesizes that it may have been either the village of *Setjala or Chmimu.*

Sata Oyo

Mel Hunter (1971:18) described a site (SLO-600) three miles northeast of Santa Margarita that covered about an acre of ground. It has an extensive shell scatter, one BRM and a burial area from which came glass trade beads and shell beads placing it clearly in the mission era. This site is in the vicinity of the area identified on the 1858 map as Satagolla.

CONCLUSIONS

From the evidence presented above, the placement of the original village of Cholame in the vicinity of Parkfield and of the important village of Tisagues in the area of the present Cholame post office appears to be compelling. Being able to identify these villages could help in working

out the placement of other villages as well as historic routes between the Salinas Valley and the San Joaquin Valley.

Two other villages mentioned in the mission records, *Camate and Sata Oyo,* also seem to be identified in the Land Grant records. It is now possible to provide some highly probable locations for these villages, or at least of the areas primarily utilized by the people identified with a given *rancheria.* A fifth village, *Lhuegue* may be associated with SLO-487 and/or SLO-488.

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